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NOT OUR CHAIN.

BY ADELAIDE A. PROCTOR.

My God, I thank Thee who hast made
The earth so bright,
So full of splendor and of joy,
Beauty and light;
So many glorious things are here,
Noble and right!

I thank Thee more that all our joy
Is touched with pain;
That shadows fall on brightest hours;
That thorns remain;
So that earth's bliss may be our guide,
And not our chain.

From the Dead Past.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SCRUB," "A BITTER CUP," "LOVER AND LORD," "THE WYCHFIELD HORROR," "A SILVER WEDDING," ETC.

[Following is a synopsis of this story so far as published. Beatrix Massey and Rosalie Hurst are sisters; the latter, the elder, being, as is supposed, a widow. There is some mystery in her marriage. They live at Wilminster, in a house owned by [illegible] neighbors of theirs are the Marsden girls, daughters of the Rector. Beatrix has told her sister, in the way of gossip, that Dolly Marsden is engaged to a young Baronet, Sir Walter Brackenbury. Rosalie receives this news with every sign of great agitation and excitement. Brackenbury is at the Rectory talking with his intended and her sisters. This brings the course of events to the present chapter.]

CHAPTER III—(CONTINUED).

MAGGIE looks sharply into her unamiable sister's face, trying to read her thoughts, trying to guess what meaning underlies her vaguely threatening speech. It is an unprofitable effort, for in truth Dora has no real meaning; her words are the mere outcome of a restless irritation, a strong spiteful desire to make others as uncomfortable as herself. She has always resented her youngest and prettiest sister's position as privileged pet, and, now that she is to be lifted over all their heads and dowered in dazzling fashion with all fortune's choicest gifts, the grudging disapproval grows to a feeling of active hate.

"Lady Brackenbury—Lady Brackenbury!" she repeats, with ever-growing bitterness. "What sort of stuff are Jane and Constance and Margaret made of that they can actually take pleasure in the idea of that chit patronizing and 'being kind to' us? She shall never be kind to me, I promise her that, when she is Lady Brackenbury—if she ever is; for there is 'many a slip twixt the cup and the lip!' If one were maliciously inclined, it would still be possible to make mischief between those two."

It does not look a very hopeful enterprise just at this moment. The young pair stand by the piano turning over the contents of a music portfolio, and talking in happy lowered tones, seemingly content with each other and with all mortal things. They are a picturesque pair too, the bright-faced well-built young soldier and the pretty fair-haired girl, who looks prettier than ever in her fulness of joy.

"But she is not for one moment to be compared with Rosalie Hurst," Dora thinks, with exultation. "She will make Dolly look a child, a mere awkward school-girl, and then——" Dora breaks off, with an almost pleasant smile.

And meanwhile the lovers themselves are discussing Rosalie Hurst.

"Make Dolly sing, Sir Walter," Maggie has said; and Sir Walter has gladly obeyed the behest, and is now occupied in the pleasing business of selecting his sweetheart's song. It appears to be a rather difficult task; piece after piece is selected and laid aside, while the low-toned conversation goes on. At last Maggie grows impatient, and makes a dash at the music herself.

"Let me choose for you," she says merrily, turning the sheets over in her brisk bright way. "Here, this is rather antiquated but not altogether inappropriate. Suppose you try it, Doll."

"'Sweethearts!'" Dolly says, with a little blush and a swift reproachful look. "You know I cannot sing that, Maggie; it is Rosalie's!"

"Rosalie's?"

The name is echoed in so strange a tone, a tone in which there are surprise, bewilderment and pain, that Maggie turns quickly round, and is herself surprised to see how pale her future brother-in-law has grown, with what a queer scared expression he is staring at the word "Rosalie" on the title-page of the song.

"You are not well," the girl cries bluntly, fixing her honest eyes upon the troubled face. "You look as though you had seen a ghost!"

Sir Walter smiles with visible effort, and gives himself a little shake before he says—

"Ghosts are of many kinds, Maggie, and I have a few specire memories connected with that song. No—it is no good making big eyes, and looking so curious and eager; I shall keep my hobgoblins to myself. But don't think me too curious in my turn. Who is the Rosalie who sings 'Sweethearts?'"

"A very old friend of ours—a Mrs. Hurst. Or rather, it would be more correct—would it not, Dolly?—to say the sister of a very old and dear friend. I don't think we are any of us devoted to Rosalie herself."

"Is she a neighbor of yours then?"

"Oh, dear, yes! We see, not her, but her sister, Beatrix Massey, every other day. It will be queer indeed if she does not run in to see you to-morrow. And I warn you, Walter, you will have to make another sister of Trix."

"And surely too of Rosalie?" Dora breaks abruptly into the conversation, her cheeks burn, her eyes are sparkling. Never have her sisters seen her look so eagerly interested before. "Trix has too many champions in this house, Walter; I must in common fairness stand up for poor neglected Rosalie, and you shall tell me to-morrow if you do not think her the nicer of the two."

But Walter either does not hear or does not care to answer the flippant malicious speech. Anxious as he is to like all his little sweetheart's relatives, he has been conscious from the first of an instinctive repugnancy to Dora. To him she has been courteous and civil; but the frank friendliness of the other girls is lacking, and it is only too obvious that between her and Dolly no love is lost.

"Sing this, dear!" he says, choosing a song at random from the many spread out before him; and Dolly obediently sings "Trust me not at all, or all in all."

Her voice is clear and sweet, and has been thoroughly well trained. Having a wealthy and amiable godmother, Miss Dolly possesses many educational advantages over her sisters, as Dora does not fail to remind her, with grudging bitterness, now and then. She sings too with much simple feeling, and ordinarily Walter Brackenbury dwells delightedly on every word and note; but, as Maggie notices with surprise, and Dora with spiteful satisfaction, his attention wanders oddly now, his face wears a puzzled troubled look, and Dolly has to look over her shoulder twice before he remembers to turn the page.

His thoughts are busy for the time, not with the pretty singer or the pretty song, but with a curious painful page in his past life, which seems suddenly to open itself before him. All in an instant, scenes and people that were forgotten come crowding back upon his memory. He is ten years younger than he thought himself ten minutes ago—an eager, passionate, reckless lad, thinking the whole world bounded by one woman's love, willing to surrender all things—no, all things but one—to win her.

"Pshaw!" He shakes off these oppressive haunting recollections with a vigorous effort. "What a dazed fanciful fool I am! As though there were not ten thousand Rosalies in the world, and as though they might not all sing 'Sweethearts'! I know what I think of myself; but what does my dear little Dolly think of me for going off into dreamland, while she is doing her innocent best to amuse me?"

He glances up with the thought and meets a rather wistful look from a pair of soft blue eyes, colors a little under their earnest gaze, and then, bracing himself with an effort, says brightly—

"Thank you, dear; I was always fond of that song, Dolly"—he draws a little nearer, looks intently into the young untroubled face, and says, rather inconsequently and with a strange eagerness—"I wonder if, in all and any circumstances, you would trust me, dear?"

Dolly gives a low sweet laugh of entire content, and, under cover of the music, slips her hands into her lover's.

"Why, of course I should, dear!" she says, with fervor. "But why do you put the question with such awful earnestness? I hope you don't mean to test my faith."

"And if I did, or rather, if circumstances did it for me, if you heard—what shall I say?—libellous stories about my past, insinuations against me in the present, would you still trust me through good and evil report?"

"I—I think so," the girl says, a little doubtfully; and a quick remorse punishes Walter Brackenbury for his rather cruel experiment as he sees the new perplexed shadow on the pretty face. "I should try, dear—try very hard; but I am afraid I am a little jealous, Walter. Not of your past—oh, no! I am not so foolish as that! But if, now, I were to see you care very much for any one else, or even seem to admire her tremendously——" She pauses, with a deprecatory smile. Though she would deny it stoutly if questioned, she is thinking of Rosalie Hurst, wondering if he will rave of her beauty as all other visitors to Wilminster have done. One at least of Dora's multitudinous well aimed arrows has gone home, and left a poisoned sting; try as she will, the girl cannot quite repress a nervous anticipative jealousy.

"Seem to admire whom?" Sir Walter asks, with a laugh. "Let me lower my voice to a whisper and make my communication wholly confidential, Mistress Dolly, since there are three other ladies present, and it would be decidedly uncomplimentary to them to say that I do not know a black woman from a white one, when your little ladyship is in the room?"

Whereat Dolly blushes and dimples, and says, with a pretty little pout—

"Now you do think me a greedy monster, to fish for such an outrageous compliment and require such exclusive devotion. I am not so stupid really, dear! Only—only, to-night I have one or two queer fancies in my head."

"Put there by my melodramatic outburst?"

"Oh, no!" She glances involuntarily at Dora, then as quickly averts her eyes, as she meets her sister's intently observant gaze. "They were there before you spoke!"

"Let me hear them then."

"Not for the world!" She withdraws the fingers he tries to hold and makes a quaint little grimace. "You would only laugh at my absurdity, and, indeed, I am very much inclined to laugh at myself. And now go and fetch Maggie; I want you to hear her play."

"Anything else, your Majesty?"

"Yes, one thing more." She hesitates and looks a little troubled over the next words. "Go then and talk to Dora."

"To Dora!" He glances wistfully at the keen-eyed, dark-faced girl, and wishes that his imperious sweetheart had assigned him Constance or Kate instead; but he makes no verbal objection, only says, with a slightly rueful look, "Very well, my dear; only I ought to have a little talk with your father now."

"My father is asleep behind the 'Nineteenth Century,' as you are very well aware, and as his evening custom is; it would be cruelty and high treason combined to wake him and so make him own that he had slept," Dolly says gaily. Then, looking shyly into her lover's bright dark eyes, she adds, in a lowered and coaxing tone, "Be your nicest self, Walter; I want you to make Dora like you if you can."

"She does not like me now then," he says, with an amused and wholly unoffended look; "I more than suspected the deplorable fact. But don't let it trouble your mind, little woman; there is no great harm done. As she has known me only a few hours, the prejudice cannot be very strong."

"Oh, it is not that! I have no reason to say that Dora does not like you; only——" She breaks off, unwilling to unveil the family skeleton even to his eyes and to give utterance to the words that come spontaneously to her lips—"Only she dislikes me so much that for my sake she is sure to dislike you." Instead however, she only repeats, with a smile and a nod, "Go, dear, and be as nice as possible."

The young man unwillingly obeys her behest, and, while Maggie's agile brown fingers run up and down the keys in the rapid pace of a rattling fantasia, he drops into a low chair beside Dora and dismally considers what measures he shall take to conciliate her.

Meanwhile Dora, regarding him with sharp satirical eyes, reads his thoughts and understands with depressing clearness the reason of his coming. She smiles, well pleased at the tacit recognition of her power.

"The little fool wants to conciliate me by the loan of her fine lover," she thinks, with a contemptuous glance at the slender figure standing by Maggie's side at the piano. "Some rays of the sunshine of his presence are to fall even on me, and then of course I shall be softened and be as mawkishly amiable as the other girls. What a clever plan, and how well she knows me! Well, I am glad I have put her to the trouble of planning. She thinks I shall make mischief unless propitiated, no doubt. Well, we shall see!"

"How well your sister plays!" Walter ventures by way of a new and original remark. He must in some way open a conversation with the girl, who seems disposed to render him no help.

She responds quite amiably though, and says, with a little nod—

"Oh, yes—that is her speciality! We are all being put through our paces for your edification. Maggie is our best musician. Con paints—you will have her pictures to inspect by and by. Katie is great

at art needlework—those are her sunflowers and Japanese lilies on that tall screen. Jane is a model housewife; perhaps, if you took up your abode with us, you would be most appreciative of her gift."

"And you—what is your role?" he asks, amused by her sharp decisive manner, and glad to have the burden of small talk taken off his hands.

"The easy one of critic; I pick holes in others' work and do nothing myself," she says with cynical frankness. "But let me finish my list. Eva, who is the shyest of us all, takes the highest flight of us all—she writes poetry! No doubt if you entreat her gently she will be moved to favor you with an ode or sonnet or ballad by-and-by. I should not wonder if she were composing something in your honor now. She looks a little distracted and 'fine frenzied,' does she not?"

Sir Walter glances at the pale-faced, large-eyed girl, who has kept shyly in the background since his arrival, regarding him pensively now, and then says pleasantly—

"You certainly are a gifted family."

"We are; and Dolly is very clever indeed," she adds, with curious emphasis and a side-glance at her companion's face. "You would hardly think from the babyish simplicity of her manner what a sharp shrewd woman of business Dolly is."

This arrow misses its mark however. Brackenbury laughs outright at the notion of his little sweetheart's "sharpness" and business capacity; and, as the wholehearted contempt of that laugh strikes her, a very obstinate and ugly look comes into Dora Marsden's small keen eyes.

"Oh, well, you have yet to discover that phase of her character!" she said suavely. "I only tell you she is much cleverer than you think. She is very accomplished too—really, not in the superficial fashion of the rest of us, for her godmother took her education in charge. And she is the singer of the neighborhood, except of course on the rare occasion Rosalie can be induced to sing."

"Rosalie!" There is so strange an inflection in the man's voice, so strange a look in his eyes, that Dora feels a wicked thrill of satisfaction in the thought of trouble at hand.

"Yes—Rosalie Hurst," she says sweetly; then, suddenly raising her eyes to his, she asks, with startling eagerness, "Twice to-night you have had that sort of shock. I wish you would tell me what queer associations you have connected with the name of Rosalie?"

CHAPTER IV.

"TO GO or not to go?—that is the question."

And Rosalie Hurst gives a feverish laugh. She is decidedly feverish to-day, her dark blue eyes burn with a curious lustre, her generally pale face is brightened by a hot carnation glow; despite the fact that her lips are a little parched and her fine brows slightly drawn, she is more beautiful than ever, Beatrix Massey thinks.

"Don't go unless you wish it, Rose," Beatrix says gently and in the tone of one who is by no means eager to persuade. "It is not as though we stood on any ceremonious terms with the Rectory folk, and you are provided with a very good excuse too, having been so ill with that wretched neuralgia all night. Indeed the call was your own suggestion. I should never have dreamed of asking you to go."

"Or wishing it either, Trix." Rosalie looks not at her conscience-stricken sister but into the fire. A strange fierce smile appears on her lips and in her eyes, as she thinks how widely their thoughts diverge, how easily she reads Trix's, how impenetrably mysterious hers would be to Trix. "Never mind, my dear; I forgive your disloyalty, but cannot put an end to your suspense just yet."

"But it is four o'clock, and I have waited with my hat and gloves on half an hour already," Miss Massey protests.

"Do not wait any longer then. Go at once, and say I will follow—perhaps."

Rosalie is so decided in her indecision that Beatrix feels that it would be quite useless to prolong the argument, and with a puzzled disappointed look she turns away, saying—

"I shall not give any sort of message, mind. So you are free to come or stay, Rose."

"That is wise—leave it all in the hands of destiny," Rosalie returns, with a queer laugh; and the words ring ominously in the younger sister's ears, as she traverses the short distance that lies between the cottage and the Rectory, turning all that puzzles her simple honest mind over and over as she goes.

"Rosalie is enough to drive me into a lunatic asylum," she murmurs, with a sigh, as she passes through the Rectory gate. "She always was a little trying, but of course one made allowance for a certain amount of bitterness with her, and then she never used to be irresolute. She would do this, or she would not do that, and there the matter ended both for her and me; but now she seems in a thousand minds at once. Two days ago we were to leave Wilminster in maddest haste; to-day she allows me breathing space—at least we can talk the matter over in a week's time. I am thankful for that small mercy anyway; it will almost break my heart to leave Wilminster and—and all the people here."

Though there is no one by to cause such an effect, Miss Trix blushes finely and heaves a soft little sigh, then hurries up the gravel-path and into the pretty creeper-grown Gothic porch, where she can see that two of the girls are waiting, and, somewhat to her surprise, that one of these is the generally indifferent Dora.

"Late, Trix—we have been expecting you since three!" Maggie cries, kissing her in the frankly cordial manner that makes the third Miss Marsden's greeting so pleasant—the manner she reserves for her particular friends. "I was just suggesting that we should send Mr. Clayden in search of you—he has done nothing but look at the clock for the past hour; but Dora said——"

"Dora said that was a most ridiculous idea," Trix interrupts, blushing again and flashing a reproachful glance at her friend. "And she was quite right, Maggie."

"She must not accept undeserved praise, at any rate," Dora says, with a decidedly vexed unamiable expression. "To tell the truth, Trix, I expressed no opinion at all on the subject of Mr. Clayden's being sent as your escort. I simply said you would be here, and that you would not come alone."

"But I generally do come alone, and I have done so now, you see!" says Trix, opening her eyes in good-tempered wonder at Dora's new interest in her neighbors' affairs and at the angry frown with which she gives a curious force to her muttered—

"Yes—I see, but I don't understand!"

Maggie looks from one girl to the other and laughs gaily.

"Don't look so puzzled, Trix! You know how Dora loves to be in the right, and she is hopelessly in the wrong just now. She was so certain, for some private and particular reason of her own, that Rosalie would come with you this afternoon, that she wanted to make a bet with us all round upon the subject. Fancy our grave Dora playing such gambling tricks!"

Maggie finishes, as she began, with a merry laugh; but Trix, to whom she looks for sympathy, returns no answering smile, she is staring with almost awed surprise at the other girl's clouded face, as she cries involuntarily—

"Well, that is strange!"

"Which? That Dora should bet, or expect Rosalie to come out of her shell just for poor little Dolly's sake? No; I should not have said that, Trix. I meant nothing unkind."

Trix does not heed the penitent protest; she is very little likely to take umbrage at any time at anything free-tongued warm-hearted Maggie says, and just now her thoughts are busy with other things.

"The strange part of the matter is that Dora is so nearly right. Rosalie kept me waiting all this time for her. She had almost—nay, half an hour ago she had actually made up her mind to come."

"I knew it!" Dora actually flushes with pleasure, her little black eyes sparkle with most unamiable triumph and some other feeling that Trix and Maggie fail to comprehend. "What did I tell you, dear Maggie—you and Con and Kate, who laughed me down so contemptuously? I see a little farther than any of you after all."

"I do not envy you your vision, Dora," Maggie says, with sternness in her tone and vague trouble in her kindly eyes. "Come up-stairs and take your hat off, Trix; there will be no tennis this afternoon."

"No, stay a second, Trix!" Dora crosses her sister's request with unusual severity. "I want the whole story, please. If Rosalie were so well disposed to visit us, what made her change her mind? Did you?"

"Certainly not!" Trix cries indignantly; and she is about to follow up the prompt disclaimer with a detailed account of Rosalie's feverish indecision, but some sudden impulse, unaccountable but irresistibly strong, stays the words on her lips and warns her that it would be indiscreet to lay too much stress upon that point, so, with a quick change of tone she adds lightly, "I have not so much influence over Rosalie as the weather has: she is like a cat in her objection to a drop of rain. The first shower decided her to stay at home."

"No doubt she was not sorry for the excuse!" Maggie says; while Dora turns away with a muttered exclamation of disgust.

"You are quite perfect now, dear!" says Maggie a little later, when Trix, having taken off her out-door apparel and put her chestnut hair in order, stands looking at herself in Maggie's mirror. "Mr. Clayden will make some dreadful demonstration if we keep him longer waiting. He has been quite restless all the afternoon; and, since he knows you are here—for he must have heard your voice in the hall——"

"Now, Maggie!" Trix begins deprecatingly; but Maggie will not let her speak.

"Now, Trix, don't be a goose! Why should you try to make a mystery of what every one possessed of half an eye can see? Why should you keep in suspense a good honest man who shows his love for you in unmistakable fashion? It is not kind or right, dear! I have often bantered you on this matter; but I am speaking quite seriously now. You know Charles Clayden means to ask you to marry him, do you not?"

"I—I am afraid so, Maggie."

"Afraid!" Maggie echoes, with withering contempt. "I never thought to hear such a silly schoolgirlish speech from you. If you do not really care for the man you should have let him know it six months ago."

"It is not that Maggie!" Trix twists the broad silver bangle that clasps her round white wrist, looks down and trembles on the very verge of tears. "I care for—that is, I like him very much."

"That is quite enough then. In present circumstances you are not called upon to confess one atom more; but in this atmosphere of engagements things will soon come to a crisis, and then——"

"Oh, please don't take things for granted in that fashion!" Trix pleads piteously. "Even if—if—— Oh, there are a dozen reasons against your plan!"

"Give one as a specimen, my dear."

"Well, Rosalie——"

"That will do, Trix; I need no more. I could have told you myself that Rosalie barred your way. She would rather see your life spoiled than be herself disturbed in the least degree. No, don't fire up in her defence; I shall say what I like, and what I think of her abominable selfishness. Now look me in the face and confess the truth. Rosalie has made you promise to say 'No' when Charles Clayden asks you?"

"She has done nothing of the kind! I am not quite so weak as to give, or she so selfish as to ask, such a promise. You do us both injustice, Maggie."

"Do I?" Maggie asks drily. "At any rate, I am glad the promise has not been asked or given yet."

"But I have promised something else," Trix admits ruefully.

"I know it! The same fetter in another form." Maggie thinks. But aloud she only says, with an anxious look, "Indeed! And that is?"

"To leave Wilminster."

"For a few weeks or days. Why, that is no great harm. Charlie can follow you, and—— Oh, I am not sure that it is at all a bad plan!" Miss Marsden cries cheerfully. She can even afford to lose her chosen "chum" Trix for a time, to get that marplot of a Rosalie out of the way. "If only they could take Dora with them, how jolly it be!" she thinks, with brightening eyes. And then remorse seizes her, as she meets her friend's reproachful glance and as the girl says a little bitterly—

"Don't look so relieved, Maggie. We are not to go for days or weeks, but months, perhaps even years. Rose means to let or sell the Nest."

"Rose? But, my dear girl, the Nest is yours. What has Rosalie to do with it?"

"Oh, well, of course we share all things equally, and that was only a form of speech!" Trix cries, correcting herself hastily. "I mean she wishes me to sell the Nest."

"Do nothing of the kind, at any rate until Charles Clayden has a voice in the matter," Maggie says impressively, resolving the while to give Charles Clayden a very strong hint as to the state of affairs. "Give me a promise now, Trix—say you will agree to nothing without telling me, to no sudden flight——"

"Rosalie spoke of going this week, but now——" The sentence remains unfinished, for the door is pushed open at this moment and Constance comes quickly in.

"Well, you are a nice monopoliser, Miss Maggie, to carry Trix up here and keep her all to yourself when—not to mention the anxiety of somebody else—you knew that Walter was dying to make her acquaintance! You must be curious to see our future brother-in-law, Trix, if you have a woman's heart in your breast."

"I am—very," Trix agrees, with perfect sincerity. "I suppose he is up to your expectations, and they were rather high-pitched, Con!"

"Come down and judge for yourself," says Constance, turning to the door as she speaks; and Trix and Maggie obediently follow her down the stairs.

CHAPTER V.

WHILE watching Trix and Maggie up the staircase, Dora Marsden has suddenly decided that, instead of returning to the drawing-room, she will run down to the Nest and talk things over with Rosalie Hurst. A vaguely comforting idea that Rosalie is handsome, dangerously captivating, and unscrupulous enough to win Dolly's lover from her, if he is in any way to be won, has made her from the first feverishly anxious to drag Trix's brilliant sister upon the scene, and since last night something too formless and indefinite to be called either a suspicion or a hope, though it is a feeling allied to both, has intensified that longing a hundredfold.

"Yes, I will see Rosalie and pick up a few definite ideas," she says to herself, with a threatening smile on her thin lips and in her keen eyes, as she slips on her hat and ulster, and prepares to face the rain, which is coming down pretty heavily. "There are plenty of chattering fools in there"—meaning the drawing-room, where all the Wilminster folk, it seems, have assembled to do honor to Dolly Marsden and her betrothed. "I shall never be missed, and I could not have a better opportunity for a confidential chat, with that marplot of a Beatrix out of the way—not that I shall get much out of Rosalie. She is a bit of a mystery even to me. But never mind that; I don't want to get, I want to instil ideas, and don't doubt that I shall sow my seed on richly fertile ground. Rosalie was coming—there is nothing strange in that. It only shows for the thousandth time how perverse and unobservant the other girls are; but it is a little strange that at the last moment she should have changed her mind. The rain had nothing to do with the matter—to put it forward as an excuse was a mere clumsy after thought with Trix, and she blurted it out in a bungling fashion that would not have decided a decently observant dog. However, it is of no use speculating—I shall see for myself soon."

Filled with these and other congenial thoughts, Dora makes her way rapidly across the common and arrives at the Nest. She inquires for Mrs. Hurst, and, on learning that she is in the drawing-room, proceeds thither with soft steps, delighted at the chance of taking Rosalie by surprise. Lifting the heavy curtain that hangs at the doorway, she peeps into the pretty, low-ceiled room, which is now in semi-shadow.

Rosalie is sitting in a high-backed low chair with her back to the doorway—an open davenport is drawn up close beside her, but she is not busy with its contents. Her head is bent a little forward, her hands rest in her lap. For the moment Dora thinks she has fallen asleep.

But, when a few stealthy steps have brought her up almost to the unconscious woman's chair, she quickly discovers her mistake. She sees something that dazzles and bewilders her, that sets her heart beating as it has never beaten before, that fairly outstrips all her most wildly malicious hope, and leaves her almost alarmed at the extent of her own success. Drawing nearer and nearer, and holding her breath, Dora peers over Rosalie's shoulder.

It is only a large-sized photograph that the slender hands hold so tightly—that the dark blue eyes rest upon with what the watcher knows to be a passionate gaze—the vignette portrait of a handsome, frank-looking young man in undress military uniform—a portrait taken doubtless many years ago, but one which Dora recognises beyond all possible doubt as that of her future brother-in-law.

"If only Dolly were here!" she thinks with rapture. "There would be no use to plot or scheme or make any sort of mischief then. The little fool would mak

a scene at once, and there would be an end to the engagement. Well, I can almost feel charitable again now; her triumph has not lasted long."

Forgetting, in her cruel exultation, that the sound will betray her—or perhaps, having ceased to care whether she is betrayed or not—Dora laughs aloud.

Rosalie springs to her feet with a startled and indignant cry, and, as she stands fronting the intruder, with a pale face and ominously shining eyes, the picture falls to the ground. Dora picks it up and restores it with an elaborate bow of mock politeness, not however until she has scanned it carefully.

"Allow me to restore your property and apologize for startling you," she says sweetly, "though for that matter it has certainly been a case of shock for shock."

Rosalie, generally so indolent and languid in her movements, now almost tears the picture from Dora's grasp, and, after carefully locking it up in the davenport and putting the keys into her pocket, cries savagely—

"Why did you come stealing in like a thief then? Do you mean to abandon your creeping ways?"

"My dear Rosalie, what words! Trix in a temper would never be so downright rude, and I have always thought you such a contrast, so gentle and suave. Of course you know it was quite an accident my coming upon you like that. The door stood open, and it is not my fault if I am more lightly built than Trix or Maggie, and the floors don't shake under my tread. I will take care to announce my coming—that is, if ever I come again. After that tremendous reception I do not even know that I shall be allowed to sit down. What do you say, Rosalie?"

Rosalie glares at her visitor more than doubtfully, and for a moment seems inclined to refuse the requested permission in very forcible terms; but, except for its excessive amiability, Dora's manner is so perfectly natural—she is so evidently anxious to be friends—that the other thinks it better to let her have her own way, and says, with a semblance of her usual languid and rather insolent indifference—

"Oh, sit down by all means! It is ridiculous to make a fuss; but I detest being startled. It is a relief to see any one this dreary afternoon. I was reduced, as you see, to that last refuge of the destitute—sorting old papers and putting things straight."

Dora nods and drops into a seat that is still lower than Rosalie's—a mere puff cushion on the rug, whence, if she cares to do so, she can watch the play of the firelight on the beautiful discontented face.

"Yes, it is dreary work," she agrees lightly. "You would have almost done better, Rosalie, to honor the Rectory with your presence. They are very lively over there to-day; and Trix told us you had quite made up your mind to come."

Rosalie gives a short impatient laugh.

"Trix's assertions will generally bear some qualification. I certainly did think, though I am now so generally recognized as a non-visiting person, that in the circumstances——"

"In the circumstances—yes."

Dora speaks in a tone which, though merely mediative, has something peculiar in it that makes Rosalie stir uneasily in her seat and flash an imperious glance at her companion, as she cries hurriedly—

"I wish you would let me finish my own speech, Dora. In the circumstances, I thought that even I must make an effort to congratulate Dolly on her betrothal."

"And to see her betrothed—that was very nice of you, Rosalie. And then you changed your mind."

"The rain changed it for me, rather," Rosalie says, with a restless movement of her head. "What a cross-examining mood you are in, Dora! I had a rather tardy desire to do a decently civil act; but that desire was not strong enough to stand the test of a wet walk, even though——"

"Even though, at the end of it, you would meet Sir Walter Brackenbury. Oh, forgive me, Rosalie, I am doing the same rude thing again and finishing your sentence for you; but I wanted so to ask one question. Are you not wildly anxious to see Dolly's lover?"

Innocent as Dora's looks is, Rosalie cannot doubt that the question is a challenge; her violet eyes light up and flash back a swift retort. She does not however answer at once in words, but first studies her companion's face, then her own pretty silver buckled shoe, on which the firelight plays enticingly, and finally rouses herself to say, with a lazy smile and a half-suppressed frown—

"How am I to answer that question honestly to Dolly's sister? You know yourself, Dora, it is not to be done! I am not like Trix; I cannot go into ecstasies and agonies over concerns that are none of mine. Dolly is a pretty little thing, and I am glad she is going to marry so well. I honestly intended a pilgrimage to the Rectory—would go even now, for I left Trix quite in doubt upon the matter; but it is very damp outside, and we are more comfortable at home on a wet afternoon."

She glances round the pretty room, which certainly looks comfortable and neat. Graceful, smiling, self-possessed, and perfectly consistent in her indifference to all other people's concerns, she seems as little as possible like a woman with any fear in her mind, with any secret that she cares to hide. Yet with every word she speaks Dora grows more absolutely sure that she is the prey of consuming anxiety.

"What can it be?" she muses, while she nods and smiles and seems to notice nothing strange in Rosalie's manner. "She is acting now—acting extraordinarily well too, but not well enough to deceive me—though, if I had seen or heard nothing, I don't suppose I should have discovered anything amiss. What can there be between her and Walter Brackenburg? I don't believe he knows she is here, and yet she was going to meet him; but her courage failed, I suppose. Well, I must make a bold stroke and get to the root of the matter; luckily she has given me a card to play—a card literally, and one that ought to count for something."

"Yes, it is very comfortable!" she goes on aloud, assenting to Mrs. Hurst's last remark. "And we all know that to such a solitude-loving Sybarite as you our tame company does not offer sufficient attractions to draw you from your den; but now we have something more lively than usual going on. And were you quite such a scornful misanthrope when you first knew Walter Brackenbury, Rose?"

Dora put the question with a quick change of tone, a sudden piercing look into the face that grows paler and wears a more scared expression that she has even in her most hopeful moments expected to see.

"The plot thickens! What mysterious link can there be between them?" she thinks, hardly able to repress a chuckle of mischievous enjoyment. "A strong mixture that will make Dolly's hair stand on end when she hears of it—that, of course. But it almost seems as though there had been something more. He can't have married her. No, that's absurd. If she were a runaway wife, she would not have dreamed of facing him; whereas, if he had deserted her—— Oh, nonsense; I must not give the reins to my imagination, and neglect probabilities altogether! We are not going to have a five-act drama played out in this prosaic slow-going old Wilminster."

Meanwhile Rosalie, recovering from what has been a sharp shock, fixes her large brilliant eyes upon Dora's small shrewd ones and vainly tries to look the audacious intruder down.

"I think you are a little crazy this afternoon, Dora," she says, in a would-be puzzled tone, which only strengthens Miss Marsden's conviction that there is a very well-defined fear underlying her words. "When I knew Sir Walter Brackenbury, you say?"

"Well, there is nothing so very wonderful in that! You did know him, of course, Rosalie, or how did you become possessed of that very excellent likeness you were studying so affectionately when I came in? My admirable but slightly mysterious future brother-in-law has never graced the photographer's windows so far as I know."

"So you recognized the picture?" Rosalie asks slowly and by way of gaining time, as her companion is quick to see. "You have expectionally sharp eyes. You would make a good detective, Dora."

"I flatter myself I should," Dora returns with much complacency. "I never see the suggestion of a mystery without wanting to penetrate to its heart. By the way, that is not meant for a threat, Rosalie."

"How should it be? And for whom?"

"Oh, I did not know!"—and Dora laughs. "I thought you might take the words to yourself, because you are one of the persons with a secret, you know."

"Who told you that?"

"The detective instinct and Walter Brackenbury's picture. No, don't color up and condemn your own imprudence and my prying ways in true melodramatic fashion! The instinct spoke first, and warned me in the queerest way of complications in store. Now it seems almost incredible that without the least clue to the real state of affairs——"

"And how much of 'the real state of affairs' do you know now?" Rosalie asks, fixing her feverishly bright eyes upon Dora's face and raising her pretty dark head defiantly. "How much?"

"Why, nothing," Dora answers drily and with a keen appreciation of the other's agonized suspense—"but the great fact that there is something to find out."

"Either by fair means or by foul?" Rosalie interrupts excitedly; and Dora nods.

"Either through him or you."

"Through me?" Rosalie's laugh has a fierce and jarring ring. "Really, Dora, you grow more delightfully absurd every moment. How many novels of the Gaborian class have you read lately? Quite enough to turn your brain and make you turn all the simple incidents of daily life into the elements of tragic mystery! Well"—she breaks off abruptly, and then proceeds in a tone of sharp horror—"what are you driving at, Dora? Why do you look at me like that? Why do you not say plainly what you mean?"

"Simply because you will not let me, because you wander off into a maze of words just to deceive and confuse me, just to gain time. Now time will not do you much good if you have anything worth hiding to hide. I shall find it out sooner or later; but I would rather you told me the secret yourself—rather you trusted me, Rose."

Rosalie stares hard into the fire; but Dora sees that she is impressed, and hurries on.

"There is some secret tie between you and Walter—he too betrayed the fact last night."

"He?" Rosalie turns upon the girl with almost lightning swiftness now, her lips quivering, her eyes and cheeks glowing. "He—he knows then that I am here?" she asks, with breathless eagerness; then there dawns upon her the suspicion of a trap into which she had almost fallen with headlong haste. She frowns, and adds, with curious mocking emphasis, "You doubtless spoke to him, and he manifested much emotion when he heard of Mrs. Hurst!"

If she has thought to set trap for trap the effort fails, she catches nothing for her pains. Dora nods and smiles shrewdly as she retorts—

"A bad shot, my dear. I fancy all news of 'Mrs. Hurst' would have left him quite unmoved. I fancy—never mind that though, we are not dealing with my fancies now, but with substantial facts. You know that old song you lent Dolly some time since—'Sweethearts'——"

"Oh!" The cry that breaks from Mrs. Hurst's lips sounds like one of sharpest physical pain. She turns, with no attempt now to dissimulate her eager interest, and asks—

"Did he—did Sir Walter Brackenbury speak of that song, and of——"

"Of 'Mrs. Hurst?' My dear Rose, what a preposterous question! How should he see any connection between the two? But he did see the word 'Rosalie' on the top of the page, and directly he had seen it there came over him a great and curious change. He asked a few questions—I don't quite know what they were—of Dolly and Maggie, and then he tried to let the matter drop. But it was evident, even to them, that he had received a shock of some kind. He listened with very half-hearted attention to Maggie's music and Dolly's song, and soon came over to take a seat beside me, and pick up all the information he could about you."

"And you gave him——"

"None—or only vague and misleading scraps such as he might have gathered from any one else. I told him you were Trix's sister, a young and very beautiful widow, living here a life of extreme seclusion; but that doubtless, as Dolly's betrothed, he would be admitted to the honor of your acquaintance. He listened with eager, but very grave attention, and seemed to be comparing all he heard with something in his own mind; but, except in the way of politeness, he volunteered not a single remark."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A SCIENTIFIC writer asks whether ants talk, and as an answer he says he saw a drove of small black ants moving apparently to new quarters. Every time two met they put their heads together as though they were chatting. To investigate the matter he killed one, and the eye-witnesses of the murder hastened away and laid their heads together with every ant they met. The latter immediately turned back and fled.

Bric-a-Brac.

BIRD-BATHS.—Swallows and martins are as nice in their choice of bath-water as any "professional beauty"; nothing but newly-fallen rain-water thoroughly pleases them, and, if tempted to bathe, it is generally by some shallow pool in the road which an hour's sun will evaporate.

THE DOOR NAIL.—The door nail in earlier times was the plate on the door upon which the old-fashioned knocker struck to arouse the inmates of the house. As the plate or nail was struck many more times than any other nail it was assumed to be deader than other nails. Hence the phrase, "dead as a door nail."

PERSIAN CARPETS.—People in Europe who buy Persian carpets little think of the enormous labor that has been expended on the weaving. It is done exclusively by hand; and every stitch in the carpet is made separately, being afterwards clipped with the scissors and beaten down. Some idea of the work may be formed when it is known that in a good carpet there are about ten thousand stitches to every square foot.

TREE-CLIMBING KANGAROO.—It appears that Northern Queensland has a tree-climbing kangaroo. This remarkable marsupial has a body about two feet in length, with a tail somewhat exceeding two feet. The disproportion between the fore legs and the hind-legs is not nearly so great as that of the ordinary kangaroo and wallaby; the toes are strong and curved, to enable it to climb tall and straight trees, on the leaves of which it exists.

IRON SHIPS.—The first account we have of an armored ship is in 1530. It was one of the fleet of the Knights of St. John, entirely sheathed with lead, and is said to have successfully resisted all the shot of that day. At the siege of Gibraltar in 1782 the French and Spaniards employed light iron bomb-proofing over their decks. The first practical use of wrought-iron plates as a defence for the sides of vessels was by the French in the Crimean War in 1853, to be used against the Russian forts in the Baltic.

OYSTER.—A single full-grown oyster produces, at the proper season about a million young, which swim about for a week or so, and then settle down to home life, attaching their still microscopic shells to any solid body which in their wanderings they have encountered. They are now about the twentieth of an inch in diameter, and form little white specks, called "spat." In six months they attain the size of a threepenny-piece. At two years old they are two inches across, and at three years three inches.

BANK NOTES.—If a fellow comes around and wants to bet you $5 that if you will tell him the last four figures of the number of a bank note he will tell you the letter of the note, don't you take him up. You offer to bet him the same way, and if you succeed in getting him to bet, divide the figures of the note by 4. If they don't divide even and one remain the letter is "A;" if two remain the letter is "B;" if three remain the letter is "C," and if they divide even the letter is "D." If you know how to divide you will win his money.

CHINESE OFFICIALS.—A Chinese mandarin is not expected to have any friendships or intimacies outside of his office, and he cannot encourage visitors within its precincts without laying himself open to a charge of favoritism or corruption. If the inhabitants of a district wish to show their appreciation of an official's administration and testify to his probity, the most effective way in which they can do so is to wait upon him at one of the city gates as he makes his farewell exit and beg the gift of his official boots, which are thenceforward preserved in some temple as public property.

A TATTOOED WOMAN.—Amongst the Maoris, as the natives of New Zealand are called, tattooing is looked upon as a proper means of adorning the person. Both men and women are tattooed, the former being often covered over with designs sometimes of great beauty. The women are usually tattooed on the chin and lips, but their appearance can hardly be said to be improved by the process. The Maoris are mostly to be found in the Forth Island of New Zealand, and their numbers (42,000) seem to prove that they are not dying out, as has been the fate of so many races that have come into close contact with the whites. Tattooing is not unknown among boys even in Great Britain, the Duke of York himself having been thus ornamented when he was a middy on the Bacchante.

NEW ORLEANS has the smallest police force of any great city in the country, in proportion to its population and the area to be guarded, although it has a remarkable record of having made more arrests than some forces double or treble its size. With a population of 242,000, New Orleans has a police force of only 256 men, and last year these men made 22,008 arrests. St. Louis, with a population of 452,000, has a police force of 800 men, which made but 20,729 arrests during the same period: while the Cincinnati police force of 489 men, with a population of 297,000 to operate upon, made but 16,994 arrests during the year.

BIRTHDAY THOUGHTS.

BY SUSANNA J.

The years press hardly on us, and our way
Is close hedged in as with a stony fence—
A wall of fate, that will not let us stray
E'en for a time to Freedom's eminence.
We put our thoughts in livery as 'twere,
And strive to be as those we dwell among,
Yet do we know the world was not so bare
When we were young!

Ah, no! The river of our life flows on:
And, though it bears from us a shining freight,
We will not dwell upon those treasures gone,
Nor think ourselves left wholly desolate.
Resigned, forgotten, and desired no more
Be those dear promises to which we clung
In days that Summer never can restore—
When we were young!

IN PERIL'S MIDST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL," "OLIVE VARCOE," "BY CROOKED PATHS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

VANE sat over the fire and finished his pipe. Should he accept his uncle's invitation and remain for a time at Vale, or should he get another answer from him respecting the two thousand pounds, and return at once to town and prepare for the new life he had mapped out for himself? He decided to stay, at least, for a few days. The place interested him, and, if the truth must be told, the owner interested him far more than did the place.

Blood is thicker than water, and Vane had already conceived a liking for this grim old relative who lived alone, and clad by day in a laborer's suit, in Vale Hall.

The events of the day had for a time driven from his mind the recollection of the Witch's Cauldron and little Nora; but as he was undressing he came upon the shilling, threaded on the ribbon taken from her hair, and she seemed to rise before him.

He looked from the window in the direction of the Cauldron and little Nora; but as he fell asleep his dreams were of the singular girl who had tried to kill him.

The next day he chose a horse—the squire had evidently given instructions that his nephew's wishes were to be consulted and his orders obeyed—and went for a ride round the estate. The squire had not exaggerated. It was vast. There were snug farms standing in wide fields and meadows; large stretches of well-timbered woods; and, lastly, the mines.

Vane gazed down the shafts of these sources of his uncle's wealth with curiosity and interest; and he began to understand as he saw the big piles of ore, the carefully constructed railways, the gangs of swarthy men and scores of horses, that the Squire of Vale was indeed a millionaire.

The men, farmers and miners, received him at first with the reserve which characterizes the people of the western coast; but they soon thawed beneath the genial sun of Vane's manner. There was a frank light-heartedness about him which melted the most reserved and stand-offish; and after a day or two he got into the habit of taking his lunch with him in a sandwich box and a flask, and eating it, and smoking a pipe afterwards amongst the men. He liked to hear them talk in their quaint, rich dialect, and he asked enough questions about themselves, their families, and their work to fill a book.

One day, having Nora and the Witch's Cauldron in his mind—and they were seldom out of it, by-the-way—he ventured a question about the smuggling.

He was sitting on the ruins of a truck, smoking his pipe, the men grouped round him, smoking also to a man. They had been talking freely enough until he said—

"Do any of you know anything about the smuggling along the coast here?"

Then they all seemed to dry up and stiffen into reserve and suspicion with one accord.

An old miner answered at last.

"What should we know about it, sir?" he said. "We're a goodish bit from the coast. Besides, they do say it's all done with, and there ain't no such things nowadays."

Vane saw that whether they knew anything of it or not, he was not likely to get any information from them, and he changed the subject.

That afternoon, while he sat thus, talking to the men, the squire rode up. He was dressed in his well-worn corduroys, and mounted on a small Exmoor pony, which Vane knew was as tough as a rock and as swift as the wind.

He eyed Vane and the men curiously, spoke a few words to the foreman, then rode off, without having addressed Vane.

The men looked at each other, and one of them emitted a kind of grunt.

"Old squire in one of his fits again," he said shortly.

"Ay!" assented the other.

"Is my uncle subject to fits?" asked Vane, "or do you mean that he was in a bad temper? Because, if so, I think you are mistaken. I don't believe a better tempered man exists."

"That's right enough, sir," said the man who had first spoken. "The squire ain't a bad sort. He's free with his coin and a good master, as times go. No, it ain't temper as we mean. Perhaps you ain't noticed, haven't been here long enough to notice that at times, every now and then, he gets an absent-minded fit, and a gloomy one. It's only natural. I reckon he's thinking, going back over the sad times at the Hall. He ain't likely to forget them."

Vane looked from one to the other, and was about to ask what they mean, but it struck him that it was scarcely honorable to pry into his uncle's private history, and getting up, he nodded to the men and strolled away.

It was an extremely quiet life for such a man as Vane Tempest, and exceedingly unlike that he led in London; but he enjoyed it, after a fashion.

He seemed to have become completely severed from his past fashionable—and if it must be written, frivolous—existence; and the spell which had been cast upon him by his strange experiences in the Witch's Cauldron still clung to him.

Every now and then during the day, and always when he was undressing, he was reminded by the shilling of Nora Trevanion, and there existed a very strongo desire within him to pay a visit to the Cauldron, but his promise prevented this.

He had promised to say nothing of the two women, and not to attempt to revisit them, and with Vane a promise was sacred. He felt assured that nothing had happened to them because he must have heard of it from some of the men on the estate.

Once or twice he rode to Trelorne by a longer and circuitous road. He saw nothing of them; in fact, he met no one. A week passed in this way, during which there was comparatively fine weather, and Vane got out each day, shooting or riding. He and the squire rarely met except at meal times, and then the old man, though civil and hospitable enough, seemed to keep him at arm's length, so to speak.

Then it began to rain. When it begins to rain in the West country it doesn't appear to know when to leave off, and Vane got wet through two or three times a day regularly. So also did the squire, who seemed to be indifferent to the weather, and even to prefer drenching.

One afternoon, having changed his clothes twice, Vane thought he would amuse himself by looking up the guns and ammunition as is the fashion of your true sportsman, who, when he cannot go out killing something, loves nothing better than to furbish up his guns or arrange his fishing tackle.

It was a dark afternoon, and Vane remembering that the gun-room was not well lighted, lit a small hand-lamp, which stood in his room, and carried it with him. He got some wash-leather, and other things which he required, from James, the servant who attended him, and who now offered to assist him.

"No thanks. Tell the squire where I am if he should ask for me," Vane said, and taking down the guns he began to overhaul them.

Like everything else at the Hall they were of first-class workmanship and by the best makers, and Vane soon got absorbed in his task. He pulled a Manton to pieces and was polishing it up with the leather, when suddenly he heard a deep sigh, the kind of sigh that just stops short of a groan.

Vane looked up and round the room; the sound seemed so near that he almost expected to see someone standing beside him. He waited a moment, and was proceeding with his work, half convinced that his fancy had been playing tricks with him, when the sigh smote upon his ear again.

He put the gun down and went into the passage into which the room opened; but there was no one there, and all was silent.

The house was, in part at any rate, a very old one—one of those West country mansions which are not considered respectable or worth living in unless they are haunted; and Vane smiled to himself as he thought how good a story could be made for a Christmas party out of this mysterious sigh.

He went back to the room, and lit his pipe. The match almost dropped from his hand, for he heard the sound of footsteps—heavy footsteps, as of someone pacing up and down; and the sound came from some spot immediately behind him.

He took up the lamp from the table and examined the wall, behind which the noise had seemed to proceed.

The room was called the gun-room, but in addition to sporting weapons, gun, fishing-rods, salmon-spears, otter traps, and so on, there were some book-shelves filling two sides of the room.

Vane was now examining one of these sides. He passed his hands along the books, and was much astonished to find that they were not movable, but fixtures. Astonished, because he knew nothing of libraries, and was not aware that it is usual to mask doors with dummy books, or rather the backs of books, pasted on, so that the continuity of appearance may not be broken. He was nearly touching one of these skilfully concealed doors, and presently his hand having unwittingly pressed the spring, the door gently opened.

Vane paused at it for a moment, hesitating whether to go through the opening or to close the door again and mind his own business—to wit, the cleaning of guns.

Mr. Vale had asked him to ask no questions and to curb his curiosity respecting anything he might see at Vale Hall, and here was certainly an excellent opportunity of exercising his self-denial. But as he was on the point of closing the door again, he heard the footsteps and another sigh, and this decided him.

No human being would sigh like that unless he was in great distress, either mentally or bodily. The person, whoever it was, might be in need of assistance, and it was Vane's duty to offer it.

Holding the lamp above his head he passed through the doorway and found himself in a long broad passage. It was so large, and his lamp so small, that for a moment or two he could disanguish nothing.

Then as his eyes grew accustomed to the semi-darkness he saw that the place was a kind of lumber-room. Old oak chairs with spiral and discarded furniture of various descriptions were littered about. In one place, gleaming whitely in the dimness, was a big rocking horse, and lying on the floor beside it, a doll's house with the mistress of the mansion sprawling on her back.

The place had a pathetic look, which appealed to Vane though he was no poet or sentimentalist, but a remarkably healthy, light-hearted young man. He ran his eye rapidly over the place to see the cause of the sounds he had heard, then suddenly started and stared with an amazement beyond description at a large picture which hung in the centre of the faded walls. It was the portrait of an extremely lovely woman; a good portrait evidently, for the lips, the eyes seemed to speak.

But it was not the beauty of the face nor the excellence of the painting which startled Vane, but its extraordinary resemblance to someone he knew or had seen.

He was so absorbed in trying to remember who the person was that he had forgotten all about the footsteps and the sigh.

Suddenly it flashed upon him, as such recollections always do.

The beautiful woman whose portrait hung in the lumber-room of Vale Hall was like Nora Trevanion! It gave him a shock. He went nearer to the picture, holding the lamp above is head to examine the face more closely.

As he did so, a gust of wind swept through the room and out went the lamp.

At the same moment he heard the sound of footsteps coming towards him. He held his breath and stood on the defensive, and ready to receive any attack—for who could be prowling in that disused part of the place?—and feeling for his match-box, struck a light.

As the match flickered and the flame rose he saw the squire standing beside him. With a quick movement the old man stepped forward and pulled a curtain before the picture, then turned and sternly confronted Vane.

CHAPTER XII.

OLD Reuben Vale regarded Vane Tempest suspiciously.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded sternly.

Vane met the gaze steadily.

"I came here because I heard footsteps," he said.

"What has that to do with you?" was the grim response.

"Well," said Vane, "I heard someone sighing as if he was in pain, and I came to see what was the matter."

The old man watched him keenly, but there was no sign of flinching or duplicity in Vane's frank eyes.

"Were you spying on me?" he demanded with subdued wrath.

Vane colored, and an indignant denial sprang to his lips, but he checked it.

"The slightness of our acquaintance is the only excuse you have for such a question, sir," he said, and the patrician spoke in the tone and accent.

Reuben Vale's eyes dropped, then he raised them again.

"How did you come here?" he asked.

Vane nodded over his shoulder.

"Through the gun-room. I discovered the—well, secret door, I suppose it is, by accident. If I had known that you were here I should have come all the same, for I thought, by the sounds I heard, that you were ill. You are ill, are you not?" he added more gently, as he noticed the pallor of the lined and rugged face.

"No," said the old man sternly, "I am never ill."

"I am very glad," said Vane; "and I'll go as quickly as possible."

He moved towards a door he could just discern behind the old man; and, as was only natural, glanced, unconsciously, at the curtain which now hid the portrait.

Swift as the glance was, the old man noted it.

"You saw that picture?" he said, rather than interrogated.

Vane nodded.

"Yes."

"And you are going to ask questions?" said the old man grimly.

"I beg your pardon—not a question," said Vane quietly, but emphatically.

The squire looked at him strangely.

"You do not want to know who it is," he said incredulously, "or why you find me puling before it like a whipped cur?"

He spoke with a repressed savagery quite indescribable.

Vane leant against one of the old chairs and looked at him as steadily and frankly as before.

"Of course I want to know," he said. "You are my uncle. you have behaved like a friend to me; I have lived in your house as an honored guest. If I said that I was not at all curious you wouldn't believe me."

"I shouldn't," was the stern assent.

"Just so," said Vane as quietly as before. "But I neither ask, nor do I want you to tell me, and I certainly shall not try to learn. I am not in the habit of intruding on the private affairs of my host, squire."

The old man looked at him with a kind of unwilling admiration and respect.

"You are too much of a gentleman, I suppose," he said, but without a sneer.

It was singular—it was almost exactly what Mrs. Trevanion, at the Witch's Cauldron, had remarked.

"I hope," said Vane. "I will leave you now, sir—that is, if you are sure that you are all right."

The old man motioned him to remain, stood as if lost in gloomy reverie for a moment or two, then strode to the curtain, drew it back, and, holding up the light, nodded fiercely at the beautiful woman.

"Do you call her good-looking?" he demanded.

"Yes," said Vane, instinctively lowering his voice. Deep down in his heart was that adoration, worship, for Woman which had kept him pure and unstained even through the moral slush of fashionable London.

"Yes, she is lovely," he said.

"And you don't ask who she is?" inquired Reuben Vale.

Vane shook his head.

"Cover it up, sir," he said, almost pityingly, for he saw how the sight of the exquisite face moved the old man.

"Look at her," said the squire, pointing a shaking finging at her, a finger that shook accusingly—"that was my wife. That is the portrait of the woman who nearly sent me mad with joy for one short year, and the memory of whom has nearly sent me mad with misery ever since. She was my wife."

Vane looked his surprise.

"Your wife?" he said, "I did not know you were married."

The old man seemed scarcely to hear him.

"One short year!" he muttered more to himself than Vane. "To pay with his misery of a life for one short year! And

yet the fools who write poetry and novels would tell you that love is well worth buying, even at such a price. Love!"

He turned to Vane, who stood gravely regarding him.

"You laugh? You think that with such as I, a plain country clod, love is impossible? Were you ever in love?" He asked the question in accents of bitter self-scorn.

Vane started, and shook his head.

"I think not, sir,"

"I think not," repeated the old man. "You'd soon know if you had loved as I loved her. I worshipped her. I would have laid down my life for her. I did lay it down, for the life I live now is a living death. I would have cast myself at her feet that she might tread on me. Day and night I thought of her, and her only. I toiled for her; I wrought with heart and brain and hands to make her happy, to gratify her slightest wish, and willingly, cheerfully, with no thought of sacrifice. Why not? What was I?—a common man with an ugly, common face, with a form like this, hands like these"—he stretched them, quivering, out before him—"compared with beauty like hers? She was a star, a goddess, and I had but to kneel at her shrine, to pour out at her feet all that I possessed. I gained wealth for her, I held it but as the dirt from which I tore it. I loaded her with jewels." He strode to a corner of the room and flung open the lid of an iron box. Vane saw that the keys were in the lock, as if it had just been unlocked. "Look!" The old man plunged his thick-veined, knotted hands into the box, and dragged out a heap of sparkling gems. "None of the women of your rank, your set, could have finer gems. She was fond of them as a child is fond of a glittering toy, and I lavished them on her. I hungered day and night to prove to her how I loved her, to win her love in return. I would have committed any crime, murder itself, if she had bidden me, and made the prize her love. And I thought that I had won her. I thought that she loved me—for a year. Just twelve months." He laughed, and wiped the sweat from his face, staring hard at the face looking down, as it almost seemed to Vane, with sweet scorn of his emotion. "I was older than she," went on the old man, "but I told myself that such love as mine would wipe a score of years away. She was a lady, one of your class, and I was what you see me; but I told myself that she must, she must see that underneath this rugged exterior there burnt and throbbed a heart as full of love and tenderness as any that could beat in one of her own kind. She said so herself, often enough. Those lips—see how true they look—could lie, boy, as readily as smile. That night before she left me she let her head rest on my shoulder and whispered words of wifely love." His face went white, his voice almost inaudible. Vane, filled with pity, moved towards him, but the old man seemed to have lost all consciousness of his presence, and stared before him vacantly. "They went together," he said; "she and the man who betrayed me, and stole her from me. He was a 'gentleman.' It was fine sport for him to pretend that plain Reuben Vale was his friend, and rob the country clod of his wife." There was a moment's silence, then the old man' voice sounded through the dim room again. "Take her back?" he muttered, as if he were addressing someone who was pleading to him. "Take her back? Forgive her? Yes, yes, when she can give me back my ruined life, when she can change this heart she turned to stone back into one of flesh and blood. Yes, when she can give me back herself as she was, the woman I loved; but not till then; not till then, though I live till the Last Day!"

His voice dropped and died away. He put his hands to his forehead, and held them there for a moment or two; then, with a deep sigh, he seemed to recover consciousness of the situation, and the fact that he was not alone.

Going forward slowly, but with a steadier step, he drew the curtain aside again and faced Vane.

"You know my secret," he said sternly, grimly. "That was my wife. She left me, betrayed me. She is dead. The man who took her from me was a gentleman, an aristocratic like you and yours. I hated them before, and hated them when your father took my sister from me. Judge if I have not still greater cause to hate them. You will never inherit a rood of my land, a penny of my money. But you are my sister's child, and for her sake I will give money to fling in the gutter—after the manner of your kind."

Vane would have indignantly refused the proffered gift only pity restrained him.

But the old man's eyes were sharp.

"You refuse? You need not."

Vane shook his head.

The old man pointed to the door.

"Go to the library," he said in still calm tones.

Vane, with a last look round the gloomy place, made his way to the library, and in a minute or so the squire followed him.

His face was still white, and its lines seemed even deeper cut than usual. The dust of the room had fallen on his corduroy coat, and even on his hair. But his hands no longer trembled, and his gaze was steady and keen as usual.

"Let us speak of business and business only," he said. "The offer I have just made you is one you can accept without sacrifice of pride. When your mother married I bought some of the land belonging to her at ordinary prices, not knowing the wealth beneath it. Some of that wealth—I know its proportion—fairly belongs to you, Vane Tempest. I will give it to you. What you do with it is nothing to me. Save it, squander it, as you will."

Vane shook his head.

"Do you doubt me? Do you think I have invented the story to silence your pride?" demanded the old man sternly.

Vane hesitated.

"No, I believe you," he said quietly. "I will take enough to pay my debts—if you think so much is owing to me——"

The old man waved his hand, and sitting down at the table opened a drawer and took out a check, already filled in, and handed it to Vane.

Vane took it reluctantly and looked at it. He saw that it was made out for five-thousand pounds, and bore the date of the previous day.

"You see," said the squire, "I had made up my mind before—before all this. It is yours, fairly yours."

Vane held the check loosely, hesitatingly. Again, blood is thicker than water. The terrible story of Reuben Vale's life's agony still wrung his heart.

"See here, sir," he said, his frank voice trembling with genuine emotion. "I'd rather you'd take this back, and give me your friendship instead. I don't want your land or your money. I can even manage—somehow—to do without this. For—for my mother's sake"—his voice dropped—"let us be friends, sir."

The old man's eyes softened for an instant under their shaggy brows, but it was for a moment only. The next he had hardened himself.

"No, I want no man's friendship," he said harshly. "I have suffered enough at the hands of friends. Go your way, and leave me to mine. A carriage will be ordered for you. It will take you to Porth. You will not see me again. Good-bye!"

He held out his hand.

Vane took it and gripped it.

"I don't know whether to be sorry or not that I came," he said very quietly in his blundering, public school grammar.

The old man withdrew his hand, looked at him, turned abruptly, and left the room.

Half an hour afterwards Vane was being driven in a dog-cart towards Porth, and asking himself whether, after all, he really was awake or asleep, and only dreaming that he had been at the Witch's Cauldron and Vale Hall.

But he had two substantial proofs of the reality of his adventures—a check for five thousand pounds, and Nora's shilling!

CHAPTER XIII.

THE day Vane Tempest left Vale Hall, a slim girlish figure lay on the narrow ledge of the rock against which the bridge rested, looking down at the ravine into which Vane and his horse had been precipitated. It was Nora. The rain was still falling, drifting up the vale in a thin cloud at times, at others being driven as if despitefully by heavy gusts of wind from the sea.

She lay supported by her elbows, her chin held in the hollow of her hands, quite regardless of the rain which fell upon her like a soft veil; her hair clung to her forehead and neck like wet sea-weed, making her face, paler even than its wont, look like ivory by contrast.

There was a strange look in her face, in her eyes as they dwelt dreamily upon the ravine half obscured by the mist. Vane had remarked the wonderful power of expression which those dark gray eyes possessed, and the variety of emotions which they could so rapidly indicate. No sunflecked, cloud-shadowed, rock could change so swiftly as the lights and shadows in Nora Trevanion's eyes; and as she lay now the expressions were everchanging, shifting.

One moment the face would indicate a vague sorrow, the next as vague an unrest, then a kind of wild defiance as if she were battling with some mood or emotion. Every now and then she would drop her face wholly into her hands and breathe quickly. A dumb animal, one might imagine, some forest tiger, smitten with a mysterious pain which puzzled while it tortured it, looking and breathing as she looked and breathed. It was as if her resentment of the pain caused her more suffering than the pain itself.

Every movement she made was eloquent of an unstudied, unconscious grace, and no sculptor could have desired a better model that the half wild girl stretched in semi-savage abandon falling in the rain and chill of the late October afternoon.

After a time she rose slowly and dreamily, and slowly made her way along the narrow shelf to the ravine. She stood on the very spot where Vane had fallen, and looked down as if she were recalling some scene, fixing it in her memory. Once or twice she raised her head and looked round as if she almost expected to see him standing beside her, or hear his voice. Then, as if awaking from the dream, she would draw a long sigh and fling herself down on the soft wet moss and bury her face in her hands.

Presently the silence of the grim place was broken by a shrill "cur-loo." It sounded twice before she paid any heed, then she rose slowly, reluctantly, and looked up. Her aunt's tall angular figure, half shrouded in the mist, was standing on the bridge.

With a strange listlessness, in singular contrast to the clear lingering notes which Vane Tempest had first heard, Nora gave back the cry.

Mrs. Trevanion leant over.

"What are you doing down there, Nora?" she called down shrilly. "Come up, I want you."

Nora ascended the path, and stood leaning against the end of the bridge.

Mrs. Trevanion wiped the mist from her face and eyes with her apron and looked at her.

"I've been calling to you this last twenty minutes," she said, not complainingly, but with the coldness with which they always addressed each other. "What are you doing down there?" She did not add, "you are wet through," because neither of them would have thought anything of it. To be wet through eight months out of the twelve was their normal condition.

"Nothing," replied Nora, sweeping the wet, thick hair from her face with a slow, listless gesture. "Do you want me?"

Mrs. Trevanion nodded.

"Yes. Come home with me."

Nora followed, her eyes fixed on the ground, the dreamy absent look settling on her face again.

Mrs. Trevanion entered the cottage and flung a thick log of wood on the fire and stirred it into a blaze beneath the kettle.

Nora sank into a chair and watched the flames, her head resting on her hand.

The elder woman as she set out the tea-things looked now and again at the bent figure, the dreamy face, then she said suddenly—

"Are you ill, Nora?"

Nora started slightly and raised her head.

"Ill? No! What makes you ask me?"

Mrs. Trevanion kept her thin lips close for a moment, then she said—

"Because you are so silent, so——I don't know how to put it. You have changed a good deal lately, Nora."

"Changed?" She looked at the elder woman's hard face inquiringly, with a slight frown of the dark, straight brows. "How am I changed, aunt?"

She spoke as if she were almost hoping for her own sake that her aunt would be able to explain.

"You are changed," replied Mrs. Trevanion. "You seem dull and out of spirits. You wander about alone all day."

"Haven't I always done so?"

"No," said Mrs. Trevanion firmly, "not so much as you have done lately. And you seem to be in the clouds or in a dream all the time. I can't think what has come to you, or why you should behave as you do, or what you can be always thinking of," she added.

The pupils of the lovely eyes contracted as if their owner had suffered a sharp pain.

"I think of nothing," she said in a low voice. "I don't know what you mean. Do I not do all you want me?"

"Oh, yes, yes," assented the elder woman coldly. "You do what there is to be done, as you always did, and you do it willingly enough, but——" She seemed to find it difficult to define the shortcoming, and paused as she went and lifted the boiling kettle from the hook and made the tea. "But I don't want to explain; I know your life is hard enough. It is not my fault."

"Whose is it?" asked Nora, not angrily, not eagerly, but so suddenly and gravely that the elder woman started slightly.

"Not yours nor mine," she said. "Why do you ask? What is it you want to know, child?"

Nora looked beyond her rather than at her.

"Am I a child?" she asked, with the same kind of gravity, as if she were simply desirous of information, as if the question had only lately arisen within her own bosom.

Mrs. Trevanion peered at her with cold scrutiny and an embarrassment she concealed.

"You ask strange questions, Nora. What has come to you? You are not a child in the ordinary sense, but in others—you are different."

"Why am I different?" demanded Nora. "Why can't I read and write? He said that other girls as old as I am could do so. He said——" she stopped short, and a faint color came into her face, but her eyes did not droop. She forced them to remain looking over Mrs. Trevanion's head.

Mrs. Trevanion turned and looked at her.

"He? Who?" she asked. Do you mean Mr. Vane Tempest?"

"Yes," said Nora.

"What else did he say to you?" asked the elder woman after a pause, during which Nora had turned her eyes to the fire.

She did not answer the question.

"Was it he who taught you to be dissatisfied, to ask questions?" demanded Mrs. Trevanion.

Nora shook her head, and rose.

"No," she said, "he said nothing. Why should he? I was nothing, am nothing, to him. He has forgotten me by this time." She did not speak with bitterness; the words fell softly enough from her lips.

"Of course he has. Why shouldn't he?" said Mrs. Trevanion sharply. "He is a gentleman, as far removed, as different from us, as Lundy Isle is from London town. I thought perhaps he had been putting some folly into your head." She looked keenly at the lovely face, but it did not flush. "But, no, he is too true a gentleman for that," she broke off almost to herself. There was a moment or two of silence, then she said aloud—

"I fetched you in now, Nora, because I want you to do something. The tide turns in half-an-hour, doesn't it?"

Nora glanced at the clock on the shelf, and nodded.

"I want you to go to Trelorne," resumed the elder woman.

Nora looked up from her cup.

"To Trelorne, not to the schooner?" she said in a low voice.

The elder woman shook her head.

"No," she said gloomily. "I doubt whether we shall ever be able to meet the schooner again. The men keep a sharp look out day and night. I've had warning this afternoon that the schooner is being closely watched by a Government cutter. Nora, our business, trade—call it what you like—is at an end."

She spoke firmly, with all a man's decision.

"We must begin the world again—find a new life. I have resolved to leave here."

"Leave here?" Nora repeated the words with bated breath.

"Yes; I think, I am not quite sure, that we will go abroad, to Australia."

"Australia!" the sweet red lips formed the word wonderingly. "That is far from London, isn't it?" she asked, as if unwittingly.

Mrs. Trevanion looked at her with faint, cold surprise.

"Of course it is," she said. "But I have not quite decided."

"If we go, when shall we come back?" asked Nora. Her eyes were fixed on the fire; they had grown darker, deeper, as she grasped the significance of her aunt's words.

"Come back?" echoed the elder woman. "Never."

The expressive eyes grew black.

"Never!" she breathed.

"Yes. Why should you want to come back? Have you been so happy here? Well, I suppose you have been happy enough; you have had no past to brood over——" She pulled herself up short and went on in a different, more business-like key. "I want you to go to the landlord of the inn and give him a small parcel. You will get there quickly enough on the rising tide, and come back by the fall. There will be moon enough."

"The moon doesn't matter," said Nora calmly.

"No. There is just enough wind, and the weather bids fair. You will take care of the parcel? It is money."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LOSING AND LIVING.

BY S. U. W.

Forever the sun is pouring his gold
On a hundred worlds that beg and borrow;
His warmth he squanders on summits cold,
His wealth on the homes of want and sorrow;
To withhold his largess of precious light
Is to bury himself in eternal night.
To give
Is to live.

He is dead whose hand is not opened wide
To help the need of a human brother;
He doubles the length of his life-long ride
Who gives his fortunate place to another;
And a thousand million lives are his
Who carries the world in his sympathies.
To deny
Is to die.

Lips That Are Near.

BY D. P. CUDLIP.

CHAPTER IV—(CONTINUED.)

IT was this which checked Jack from saying, "But I have some one to work for."

Hastily recovering herself, with a woman's tact, she changed the conversation and asked:

"Of course, you are going to the ball to-morrow night?"

"To tell you the truth, I had meant not to go, but if you would like me to go . . ." And the wealth of meaning he put into this unfinished sentence caused the girl's heart to beat with happiness as she answered softly:

"Of course I shall like you to go."

"Then I will," he answered promptly, and allowed himself to enjoy the pleasure of the moment, without another thought of the after consequences.

The next day, Jack having got through his duties on parade and in the orderly room, devoted himself with wonderful energy to getting that "copy," which was so behindhand, off his mind, so that in the evening he felt able to go to the ball with the virtuous sensation of work done, and having thus arranged his conscience to his own satisfaction, he meant to enjoy himself for this evening at least.

"The young beauty is surpassing herself to-night," was the verdict of all who saw Belle Holroyd. She certainly did look lovely; her fair skin and glowing eyes, that at night seemed to look almost black, showed off to perfection by the dead white of her dress. This was her first season, so her coloring had not been spoilt by the Indian climate, and the whiteness of her skin could easily bear the challenge of her dead white dress, and lose nothing by the comparison.

To-night, however, there was a new beauty in her face, that far outshone the mere beauty of form and coloring. The lovely dark eyes shone with a tender light, the beautiful lips quivered, as with some intense suppressed excitement, while the color in her face came and went in a way that put a stop at once to the suggestions of some of her friends, that "Miss Holroyd's complexion was not her own."

Moreover, this was the first "real ball" she had been to, and her fresh young nature gloried in the excitement and novelty of it all.

Added to all this, didn't she carry in her hand a bouquet, which had arrived for her with "Captain Macgreggor's compliments," just as she was starting? And young and ignorant as she was in many ways, she thought, "He must mean me to think he cares for me." Jack had already come to be thought of as "he" by this girl.

She had only begun to realise that she loved him, and, with the frankness of her nature, she thought no shame in owning it to herself. He treated her differently from the half sentimental, wholly flirting way that the other men showed towards her.

The deferential reverence he had paid to her young womanhood had touched her and made her exalt him, in her own mind, as a Sir Galahad, who was immeasurably superior to all other men. And she mutely acknowledged his superiority, and fell down blindly before him worshipping.

She was not the only one who was struck by Captain Macgreggor's manner towards herself. Others knowing Jack to be the thoughtless, happy-go-lucky flirt he was, were struck by the different way he treated her to the other girls of his acquaintance, and they assumed he meant something by it all.

To do him full justice, he had never thought of such a climax at all. His manner to her had been deferential, for the purity and freshness of her nature had demanded it of him, and he felt he never could have carried on a flirtation with this girl, who was so unspoiled as yet by her surroundings.

He liked her immensely, and liked talking to her, and being with her; in fact, he used to think she would be such a charming friend for his wife when the latter came out to him, and he would picture to himself what a happy trio of friends they would be, until gradually the thought of "Belle" became detrimental to the thought of "Mabel." For Belle was there to please him with her appreciation of himself, which was pleasant, and Mabel was not there, which just made the difference.

"Thank you so very, very much for this lovely bouquet, Captain Macgreggor. I cannot thank you half enough," and as if to show her appreciation of it, she buried her face in the lovely blossoms, drinking in the perfumes with an almost childish delight.

"It is nothing to thank me for," he replied. "I, on the contrary, have to thank you for accepting my flowers. They're not half good enough for you. I wish I could offer you something better," he went on fervently; and something in his tones caused the girl to tremble with anticipated happiness.

They were standing apart in the shadow of a bay-window, skilfully arranged for sitting out. The window was wide open to let in what air there was, and the scent of the flowers, the sound of the music, and the sight of the beautiful woman at his side, evidently made Jack oblivious of all else. The influence of the hour was upon him and he was powerless to resist its soothing seductiveness.

She had put her hand on his arm, and the touch thrilled him in a way that a man pledged to another woman ought not to have been thrilled.

"I shall value these flowers," she said, touching the bouquet with her lips, "all my life, because you have given them to me."

She still thought him a god among men, and therefore herself highly honored among women at receiving even this gift from him. It was no coquetry on her part that prompted her to say this, but she wanted him to know that she appreciated his gift; and also, she wanted him to know how great her trust in him and respect for him was.

She forgot that in doing so she would be obliged to show her love for him also. That wonderful inflection of the voice, which love alone can give, was bound to tell the tale.

And he saw it and was glad. Prudence, honor to the girl to whom his honor was already pledged, conscience, everything was forgotten; he only knew that this beautiful girl at his side loved him, and he loved her.

He seized her hand and told her brokenly how passionately he loved her, in spite of himself, "because he dared not ask her to marry him, and he was a mean cur to have told her so much."

At these words Belle turned deadly white, and she tried to frame a question, but her quivering lips refused their office, and she turned a mutely-appealing face towards him.

Reading the fear expressed there he hastened to add:

"How can I ask you to marry me, when I have no means to support a wife? The mere fact of your being wealthy prevents my doing so. Had you been poor I might then have dared to hope; as it is——"

"As it is, Jack, I will ask you to be my husband, and help me to use that money rightly."

A burning flush of almost shame spread rapidly and painfully over her face and brow, and even throat, as she said these words; but she was a brave girl, and she thought this man loved her well enough even to leave her, if the doing of it appeared more honorable in his eyes, and instantly, she saw it was in her power to reverse the positions and give freely to him that for which he dared not ask, and she did it generous and openly, as was her nature.

"My darling," he whispered passionately, "my own generous darling, you shall never regret having trusted me; we will not mind what other people think, will we?"

"Of course not, because I know, I know," she repeated with gentle, loving emphasis, "that you love me for myself; it is not for my money; that merely comes in to make it all smooth for us, which is so nice. I am so glad to have it to give it all to you. I feel I cannot do enough for you, Jack."

Even no thought of Mabel came to him; he was completely intoxicated by the joy of the moment, and actually oblivious of all else. Just then the band commenced playing an overture to the Lancers.

"I think this is our dance, Jack," Belle said, looking at her programme. "Shall we dance it together? Oh, yes, we will, certainly," she went on. "It's the 'United Service' Lancers. I am so fond of that set of music; besides, do you know, sir, that was the first dance I ever had with you. Do you remember?" she went on eagerly. They were walking towards the ball-room. "It was at Mrs. Fellow's afternoon dance, the first I ever went to after leaving school, and you were introduced to me and asked me for the only square dance on the programme. You were wary of dancing a waltz with a raw schoolgirl," and she laughed at the recollection.

"Did I, dear? What a bear you must have thought me," and he bent his head towards her as he spoke that caused many to conjecture. "So we'll certainly dance this set of Lancers for old acquaintance sake."

They had danced through nearly all the set, the last one only remained, and Captain Macgreggor went round arranging the intricacies of 'inside, outside' preliminary to the grand chain. He had regained his place and was holding Belle's hand in readiness, the bandmaster's baton fell, and the band struck up "The girl he left behind him."

In one awfully heart-sickening moment it all came back to him; he cursed his folly. "If only the band would stop playing that ghastly air," he said to himself, for that "ghastly air" brought back all too vividly the scene in Portsmouth docks, when he had vowed that nothing, nothing, could ever make him cease to love the "girl he left behind him."

But that was then, and this was now, which made all the difference. Moreover, now Tartar need not be sold.

CHAPTER V.

SOME weeks after, Mabel, while sitting by her father's bedside—Colonel Armstrong had been struck down suddenly with paralysis, and the doctors gave little or no hope of his recovery—received a letter from India, which bid fair to destroy her reason, it contained such a cruel bitter shock to all her brightest hopes in life.

With white set face she read it on to the bitter end, then with a wail that was heart-rending, she slowly laid her head on the table, and covered her face with her hands. She tried hard to shut out the shame and the sorrow that had come to her. She was stricken to the earth, and by the hand she loved most in the world. She longed to go away and hide her sorrow, so that none should see how she suffered; like some wounded animal she longed for solitude.

Presently a motion from the bed aroused her. The stunning blow she had received has caused her to forget the sufferer, who, in a state of semi-unconsciousness, was spending his last hours on earth.

A flood of remorse came over her for having so forgotten her father. "Thank God!" she muttered to herself, "I have that poor invalid to look after and occupy my thoughts, or I should go mad." But it was a very white and terribly aged face that lifted itself to take up the burden of life again, that life which but a short time before had seemed such a good thing.

The letter which caused this change ran as follows:

"I have been meaning to say something to you for some time past" (there was no beginning to the letter) "but the dread of giving you pain has held my hand, dear Mabel. You of all women know me well enough to know that I would die sooner than cause you sorrow.

"I wish, dear, we had never met, as I see now it was presumptuous folly on my part ever to think I could maintain you in a way worthy of you. It would break my heart to think I could not give you the hundred and one little luxuries that I should like to give you, and that you ought to have.

"If you married me I should drag you down to a life of poverty, for I find that I shall never be able to augment my income in the way I once hoped and firmly believed myself able to do. I mean that I cannot write as well as I used.

"The horrid climate numbs my faculties and I cannot help seeing that the strain of overwork is telling on my health to such a degree as to force me to give up my work. Consequently, you will see, like the sensible girl you are, how impossible it is for me to think of marrying. I give you back your liberty, dear Mabel, and hope that your future life may be a far happier one than I could ever have made it.

"Though I may never be anything more to you, I hope you will let me be always

"Your very sincere friend,

"JACK MACGREGGOR."

With a set white face Mabel read it through again. Then she slipped the half-hoop diamond ring off her fingers, and together with the other presents she had received from her lover, made them up into a parcel and directed them to him. Then with trembling fingers she tried to write a few farewell lines, but it proved too much for her, and burying her face in her hands she burst into tears. Controlling herself, however, she set herself sadly but steadily to the task of writing those farewell words.

"Dearest," she wrote, "I may call you so now for the last time. Since you have 'given me my liberty,' I can but accept it without protest at your hands. You ask me to forgive you the pain you cause me. I do so willingly, for I cannot bring myself as yet to feel anything like anger against you. Do not try to deceive me; I can read between the lines; but I can only think you give the false reason in order to spare me the pain of telling me the truth, namely, that you are tired of me. I cannot accept your offer of mere friendship after all we have been to each other. So good-bye, my love, my love."

Without signing it she folded it up, put it in an envelope and addressed it, and for fear of her courage failing her at the last, she put on her hat and herself posted the last letter she could ever write to the man she loved.

Thus ended her romance.

For the next few days her father's precarious condition and utter dependence on herself, helped her from dwelling too much on her own sorrow. He required all her care, and she gave it willingly, and was always bright in his presence in spite of the heavy weight at her heart.

Several weeks passed, until one evening Mabel went as usual to relieve guard with the hospital nurse; the latter beckoned to her to come to the side of the bed. Her father was dying; there was just one momentary look of recognition; the next moment he sank back on the pillow with Mabel's hand in his and passed quietly away.

It was all over. Mabel, Bobby and a strange gentleman were sitting together in the little drawing-room over the fire, which threw fitful lights and shadows on the walls, and brought out the intense pallor of the girl's face in marked contrast to her black gown. Bobby was strangely subdued, as children are when brought in contact with death. The strange gentleman was their mother's only brother, who had just returned from Ceylon.

"You and Bobby will, of course, make your home with us until you marry my little girl," he said affectionately, and he patted Mabel's head as he had been used to do when she was a little child. He had not heard of the engagement being broken off, so was not prepared for the heart-broken cry that involuntarily escaped the girl's lips as she answered him:

"That will never be, Uncle Ben; Jack and I have agreed it is better not to think of each other any more."

Then the pent-up emotion, the fictitious strength of the past few weeks gave way, and she fell sobbing on his shoulder as if her heart would break.

"D—— the fellow," he muttered, scarcely under his breath; "how dared he treat my sister's child like that—the hound?"

And all things considered he had good reason for using such language.

So Mabel and Bobby went to live with their uncle, who did his best to make life pleasant to his sister's children.

Glancing down the first column of the Times one day, Mabel read the following announcement:

"On the 12th inst., at Simla, Captain J. Macgreggor, of the Royal Blankshire Regiment, second son of J. Macgreggor, Esq., of Nutway Hall, Surrey, to Isabelle, only daughter of Henry Holroyd, of Simla (by cable)."

In spite of all she had gone through, she was utterly unprepared for this.

"He might have waited a little longer; I have been quickly superseded, indeed."

Luckily for her, at this this juncture pride came to her aid, and she was resolved to forget, if possible, one who had esteemed her love so light a thing as to treat it as a mere passing fancy, so she resolved to forget him; indeed it would be a sin for her to think of him now that another woman was his wife.

The wraith of her old love was still held sacred in her heart, but this man who had

deserted her and consoled himself so quickly with another was not the same being. The Jack she knew was dead to her, though she loved his memory still. Truly her idol had fallen, and she had been grievously wounded by the falling of it.

CHAPTER VI.

ONE sultry morning late in August, some fifteen years after the events recorded in the last chapter, some hundreds of people were assembled in what is called the "Chelson Meadows," near Plymouth, to witness a march past of all the troops in garrison after the autumn manœuvres. One of the carriages drawn up to witness the sight contained a lady and two little boys, who by their striking resemblance to her proclaimed them to be her sons.

They were evidently greatly excited about something and continually appealed to her for information. She was a beautiful woman, this mother of the two little boys, although her chief charm lay in the wonderful expression of the great sad eyes. It was a charm that baffled description, and can only be vaguely called "charm."

"Mother," shouted one the little boys, seizing her by the arm, "there's Bobby, look, right over there; shall I wave to him?"

"Hush, my dear boy, you really mustn't make such a noise. Wait till Bobby marches past, then wave to him if you like."

"All right, little mum; you bet, though, Jack and I'll shout like anything when Bobby comes round with the gunners; won't we, Jack?" turning to his younger brother.

"Re-ther," was the laconic reply.

Presently a flutter among the group of cocked hats announced that the royalty, for whom this show was arranged, had arrived, simultaneously with the first few bars of the National Anthem.

Then all eyes were fixed on the farther end of the field, where the troops would first appear. On they came, moving as one man, each regiment headed by their own band playing their own "March past." It was a truly inspiriting sight, and one to waken enthusiasm in the breast of the most stolid of Britons.

"Mother, here, mother, dear, do look. What a ripping regiment; aren't the men burnt; and what a smart set they are. What regiment are they, mum? Quick, before they've quite gone."

"They are—let me see," looking at the official programme; "they are the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Blankshire Regiment, just home from India," and a sudden flush spread over her face, for this was the regiment of her first love. Suppose he should be here now, how strange it would be to meet him after all these years. "I wonder if he has altered much, and if I should know him again," she murmured aloud unconsciously.

"Know who, mum? Did you ever know any of this regiment?"

"Yes, Jackie. I used to know one of them very well; and I was wondering if I should recognize him again—it's so many years since we met."

"Look, Bertie, look," whispered Jack, nudging his elder brother violently, and pointing at the same time to a handsome gray-haired man riding at the rear of the regiment. "That's the colonel, I should say. Doesn't he look jolly fierce, too? He's chopped up lots of negroes and things, I should think, by the look of him. He's just like that chap in 'The Wigwam and the Warpath,' isn't he?"

"Yes, isn't he? Oh, I wish I were a soldier. Isn't it just splendid?"

The little boys in excitement spoke so loud as to attract the attention of the man about whom they were speaking. He looked towards them, and from them to their mother, when he suddenly swerved in his saddle for an instant, then became very busily engaged in controlling his horse.

Colonel Macgreggor recognised in the mother of those two little boys the Mabel Armstrong he had so meanly treated years ago. What was her name now, he wondered?

"Anyhow," he went on to console himself with the thought, "she soon let some one else supersede me in her affections. I wonder who the fellow was? By Jove? she's wonderfully preserved. She must be nearly forty, if she's a day, and looks as charming and young as ever. I'll go and re-introduce myself after this show is over," and with this inward reflection Colonel Macgreggor rode on, having quite recovered his composure.

"The officer you two little boys think looks so fierce is my old friend. He is Colonel Macgreggor now. He was a subaltern when I first knew him."

"Was he?" with great surprise. "That must be ever so long ago. How old you must be, mum, to remember so far back as that."

Mrs. Clyste laughed merrily at her little son's words and said:

"You're just like what your uncle Bobby used to be when he was your age; just like my boy, Bobby," she went on; and the recollection of some of Bobby's sayings when a boy made her smile again. "Ah, there he is," as Bobby, a handsome young gunner subaltern of five-and-twenty, marched past in charge of his men. "Now, you may wave to him and give a cheer for the gallant gunners if you like."

They needed no second bidding, and a hearty cheer came from their lusty young throats, which was speedily taken up by the crowd, who readily followed a lead when it meant cheering.

At last the gay pageant came to an end, and one of the group of cocked hats rode up to the carriage that contained Mrs. Clyste and her two boys.

"Well, boys," said he, "and how have you enjoyed yourselves?"

"Awfully! It's been just ripping! Mother saw an old friend, and we waved to Bobby and cheered the gunners; and he was like the man in 'The Wigwam and the Warpath,' fierce-looking, with lots of medals. No, not Bobby, but Colonel Macgreggor; and mother says she knew him when he was a subaltern, father. Mustn't she be old to remember as far back as that? Did you know him, too, father?"

"No, my boy; your mother knew him before I ever met her, but I know about him. Mother and he used to know each other very well once."

He looked across at his wife as he spoke, and any fears he may have had on the subject were quickly dispelled by the loving, grateful look she gave him, and putting a hand on each of her boy's shoulders she said:

"Bring him here, Roy. I want him to see my boys, and to see how happy I am. Tell him how really pleased I shall be to see him again."

Whereupon Colonel Clyste went off in search of Colonel Macgreggor, happy in the knowledge that the sight of her old love had in no way endangered his wife's peace of mind, thanking God earnestly for having given him the power of winning her love truly to himself, so that in the strength of the later lover had nothing to to fear from the dead ashes of the first.

"Just as young and charming as ever, by Jove! And so these are your youngsters, are they? You don't mean to say so? Dear, dear, how time flies. Which is the elder? and what are they called?"

"Bertie is the eldest, and Jack is the second," pointing to each in turn.

"Jack! What made you called your boy Jack, Mrs. Clyste?"

"I called him Jack after my old friend," Mrs. Clyste replied softly.

"God bless you for it, Mabel," he answered in low, husky tones. "It was just like your generous, forgiving nature to do that; and thank you for it. But now tell me more about yourself. What has become of my old friend Bobby, eh?"

"You would scarcely recognise him now. He stands six foot in his stockings, as the old women say. He is in the artillery," she added; then with a smile she said, "It was you, I believe, who gave him the first taste for gunnery, the day of our picnic, when Bobby went up to call on you, 'all by himself,' at the fort. Do you remember?"

"Of course I do. Dear, dear; so he is a gunner, is he? How time flies to be sure. But tell me more about yourself. Have you been in Plymouth long?"

"Not very long—about twelve months. My husband is D. A. A. G. for this district, you know."

"Ah, to be sure, he is. I'd forgotten that. And you—have you been happy all these years?"

"Yes, very happy," she replied softly. "My husband has been more than good to me, and then you see I have my boys. What more could any woman want?"

"After all you are better off than I am, Mabel."

"Jack, I have been meaning to ask you. Your wife? Is she here?"

"My wife and child are both buried at Malta," he answered quietly, and there was a catch in his voice as he said the words.

Mrs. Clyste did not answer, but tears of genuine womanly tenderness and pity welled up into the beautiful eyes as she held out her hand towards him with a mute gesture of sympathy.

He held the hand offered to him reverently for a moment, and then repeated:

"Yes; you are far better off than I am, Mabel. You have these," looking towards the two boys, "while I have 'no one to love, and to love me,' as the song says. However, I mustn't depress you with my grumblings, must I?"

Not knowing exactly what to say, Mrs. Clyste was silent, but she felt very sorry for this man's loneliness.

After a moment's pause, Colonel Macgreggor turned towards her, and his face brightened as he said, "But, thank God, you at least, are happy."

[THE END.]

SHARP WATCH.—No person can live in Russia without being well known to the secret police, in whose records there is certain to be a long and exhaustive account of his personal history, including a list of his friends and associates, a description of his occupations and amusements, and a general sketch of his character.

The police are probably not unnecessarily suspicious, and they seldom commit the blunder of molesting innocent people. On the other hand, they deserve credit for marvelous acuteness in the detection of crime.

A foreign firm in St. Petersburg had in their employ a Russian clerk. He had been with them for many years, and enjoyed a high reputation as an honest and faithful man. One day, to the boundless astonishment of the foreign merchant and his staff, the office was visited by a pristaf, or chief officer of the police force.

"I have called to inquire," he said, "whether you have lately been robbed by any of your clerks?"

The merchant answered that nothing of the kind had happened. Why was the question asked?

The pristaf explained that, although the firm might have felt no uneasiness about the proceedings of their clerk, Mr. V——, yet the police had long had their suspicions, which suspicions had culminated in his arrest at the railway station that very morning. Would the gentleman please give orders to have the books of the firm carefully gone over, to see whether there had been any defalcation?

With strong protests on the part of the merchant against this unjust treatment of his trusty clerk, an examination was begun; and it was soon found that the firm had been plundered to the extent of more than twenty thousand roubles!

Then, of course the merchant begged to know how the police had become aware of what was going on. The officer explained that it was all simple enough. Mr. V—— had been seen to be spending more money than a man in his position could be presumed honestly to have. Watch had been kept upon him accordingly. His champagne suppers, his boxes at the opera, and all such expenditures had been recorded. It was known also that he had made a large remittance to a "friend" in Paris, and so, when he went to the railway station to buy his ticket to that city he was arrested.

HARD WORK.—Hard work, mental or physical, rarely ever kills. If a mild amount of physical exercise be taken and a judicious amount of food be furnished, the surface protected with proper clothing, and the individual cultivates a philosophical nature and absolutely resolves to permit nothing to annoy or fret him, the chances are that he can do an almost unlimited amount of work for an indefinite length of time, bearing in mind always that, when weariness comes, he must rest and not take stimulants and work upon false capital. The tired worn-out slave should not be scourged to additional labor. Under such stimulus the slave may do the task, but he soon becomes crippled and unfit for work. The secret of successful work lies in the direction of selecting good nutritious digestible food, taken in proper quantities, the adopting of regular methods of work, the rule of resting when pronounced fatigue presents itself, determining absolutely not to permit friction, worry or fretting, and the cultivation of the Christian graces—charity, patience, and philosophy.

BY RACKING YOUR LUNGS WITH A COUGH you may irritate them into a condition ripe for the production of tubercles, and then, instead of a curable affection, you will have to deal with Consumption. Dr. Jayne's Expectorant promptly cures all Coughs and Colds, and by imparting vigor to the respiratory organs, enables them to freely throw off all obstructions engendered by neglected Colds, and heals all sore or inflamed parts.

Scientific and Useful.

WALKING STICKS.—Illuminated walking-sticks are the latest applications of electricity. A small incandescent lamp is concealed in the head of the cane, and can be ignited by a spring.

HOT WATER.—Hot water is a sovereign remedy for many ailments nowadays. Its latest application is in insomnia. A great sufferer claims to have found immediate relief by drinking three tumblers of water as hot as he could stand it and bathing his feet in hot water just before retiring.

ELECTROLITIC INDICATOR.—Moisten paper with a solution of 50 grammes of glycerine, 20 grammes of distilled water, 3 grammes of potassium nitrate and 0.05 gramme of phenolphthalein. By touching the ends of both wires, the negative pole is indicated by becoming of a reddish violet color.

PICTURES.—The preservation of pictures has become a topic of much consideration in London. Probably the most successful experiment that has been tried is placing the surface of the picture, be it of canvas paper, in a vacuum, thus protecting it from the usual atmospheric action which is so deteriorating.

SOOT AND SMOKE.—A machine, designed to separate the soot from the smoke which the fires of manufactories yield, has been invented by a Mr. Elliott, of Birmingham, England, and tried successfully for several months past in the mint there. A correspondent has examined the device, and declares it to be perfectly simple and manageable.

COPPER COATING.—A new method of giving ships' bottoms a coating of copper has, it is said, been lately tried at New York with success. The method employed is as follows: The vessel is put into dock, and the entire hull is surrounded at the waterline by a bag made of watertight canvas supported by a net work of wire; in the bath so formed is placed a quantity of sulphate of copper solution; and metallic copper is deposited from this solution upon the ship's plates by means of the electric current generated by a dynamo-machine.

PHOTOGRAPHS.—An Atlantic City, N. J., photograher produces a photograph at a single exposure, which gives five different images of the same person in different positions. This is accomplished by placing the sitter between two mirrors placed at an angle of 45 degrees to each other. The double reflection between these mirrors produces four images of the person placed in front of them, the principles being the same as that of the ordinary kaleidoscope. The original face is made in profile and the reflections give the full face, opposite profile, and two rear views. The result is curious and interesting, and, it has been suggested, would be useful in identifying criminals.

Farm and Garden.

HOGS—The large hog is becoming the thing of the past unless lard is a specialty. Hogs of medium size now bring the highest prices and it has been demonstrated that in proportion to the time required for converting a certain amount of food into pork a larger prodt can be made from a medium size hog than from an extra large one.

MONEY-MAKING.—A man has faith in his land "runs" it for all it is worth and makes money. Whether he knows it or not, he employs scientific methods, and they are always successful in the end, when governed by common sense. But he must employ economy also. If he is wasteful he will not succeed, no matter how much he makes.

SEEDS.—The alacrity with which some farmers will attempt to save a small sum in purchasing seeds is surprising, considering the risk incurred by so doing. Good seed is more important than all other matters connected with growing a crop, as the failure of seed to germinate may prevent growing the intended crop for want of time to make a second attempt with better seed.

SCRAPS.—Carefully gather the scraps from the table and give them to your fowls. There is no kind of feed which will produce a more liberal return of eggs. There are hundreds of families who throw these scraps into the waste bucket to be taken away by the swill man, and buy corn for the fowls, when the former is by far the best feed for egg production. Corn or grain should also be fed, but only to a comparatively small amount.

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We offer One Hundred Dollars reward for any case of catarrh that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure.

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TO OUR READERS.

As this is the season when our friends and readers are no doubt thinking of kindly holiday remembrances of each other, we suggest that a good way to accomplish this worthy object, with certain satisfaction and benefit all round, is to give a year's subscription to THE SATURDAY EVENING POST. Ordinary gifts are apt to become less reminiscent of the giver after a few days or so, but THE POST would keep the time and the occasion and the memory of the giver bright, with its weekly visits to the household, all through the year. Just think and see whether any present could be given of more real value and usefulness than THE POST.

Love of Excitement.

There is a small minority of mankind who find their happiness in the complete absence of excitement; they love life best as a monotone; anything that is unusual "puts them out;" they are pained by the sight of coloring that is not in neutral tints. Such are aged people, quiet ladies who live alone, clerks who have gone to the same office and done the same work for forty years on end, and indeed a considerable proportion of the whole class of people whose feet have quietly worn for themselves a beaten circle.

It is true that many of these seemingly quiescent folk whose satisfaction is measured by their stagnation and invariability, have their little excitements which the ruder world can hardly comprehend and is inclined to treat as subjects for scoffing.

If the morning paper does not turn up prompt to time, they are thrown out of gear; and ungrateful retort from the serving-maid flutters their dovecotes sadly; the coming of unaccustomed visitors upsets the household; while, as for the clergyman, the taking of a ticket at a crowded railway-station ten minutes before a train is due causes him to run hither and thither like a distracted insect when the stone under which it had crept has been overturned and it is dazed by the light of day. So into the quietest of lives there come titillations of excitement, though the timid rote-workers dislike the flutter which is so pleasant to most of us.

We are not prepared to argue that excitement in moderation is a bad thing; there are mild forms of it which are essential to healthy and vigorous life.

An uneventful, sluggish monotonous existence may often be compared to the stagnant waters of the unruffled pond that becomes glutinous with green choking growths; while the life that is stirred by a succession of mild excitements is like the running stream.

A good deal of the love of excitement indeed is only a form of restiveness under the constantly increasing weight of leaden dulness; and a good deal is due to want of resource. If every one could find change in occupation, so that the interest of life could be evenly maintained, there would be little need for the freshening that excitement brings. Thus a man who has his life filled with tasks which are also pleasures and which follow each other in a cheerful succession has no need for the convulsive deliverance of keen excitement; he spreads his expenditure of nervous enjoyment evenly over the whole of his life.

When life runs slow and a man feels his own being a drag instead of a drama of unfailing interest, there is always a tendency to seek excitement through artificial stimulants.

It is so in the case of people who live in uninteresting tracts of country far apart, as in the less populous parts of the English districts, in which Tennyson found a beauty, but which to many minds bring only a horror of stagnation. These are the districts where opium is still taken in large quantities as a bodily sedative and mental stimulus.

Any one who doubts the continued prevalence of the opium-taking habit would soon be convinced if he glanced over the chemists' preparations for a rural market-day. It is not that the drug is liked for its own sake.

The most confirmed laudanum-drinkers often never lose their distaste, as a matter of the palate, for the drug they love, and they will take a lump of sugar after their ounce draught as a child removes the taste of medicine; yet their craving for the artificial excitement caused by the drug is insatiable.

Men drink themselves first into brightness, and then into stupidity for the same reason. Many, it is true, love alcoholic liquors because of their taste and relish, but more for the brief exaltation of spirit which they induce. They crave to be lifted for the moment above the dead level of ordinary life; and so one drinks to quicken his pulse, another reads a "shilling shocker" with avidity, a third finds a brief rapture in watching a series of crises in the lives of characters who haunt the stages of the theatres that are the homes of melodrama. They surrender themselves to these mild forms of enjoyment as to a luxury, a set-off against the commonplace average of existence.

Religion has always reached its most startling results through excitement and nervous stress, partly because of the intensity of the convictions of the men who have given a lead to their fellows, and also because the callous must be strongly moved if they are moved at all.

It is strange how many people are distressed at the sight of the more violent forms of religious emotion which are natural to rough strong natures dominated by new ideas. The finely-strung sensitive man feels that goodness ought to distil as the gentle rain from heaven, and not come as a deluge accompanied by lightnings and whirlwinds; but the fact is that these accessories are needed to sensitize nerves that would never otherwise be attunable to concert pitch.

Even so shrewd and unprejudiced an observer as Montaigne could not make it out. "Immoderation towards good, if it offend me not, amazeth and troubleth me; for I know not how I should call it." But then Montaigne confessed that he liked "temperate and indifferent natures," and that "mine eyes trouble me as much in climbing up towards a great light as to go down into the dark."

It is the power of excitement to make us transcend ourselves that is of such great use in religion. Bacon noted that he who is wounded in hot blood does not fear the hurt; and so men are carried by a wave of excitement to do the impossibilities of cold blood. Is that well? Against the love of excitement a good deal may be said.

All frenzies are opposed to reason; if we reasoned rightly and saw consequences clearly, we should rarely be excited. What need would there be? It is the swamping of reason by feeling which one sees in almost every case of excitability; and the free surrender of oneself to passing gusts of emotion is a training in instability of character and purpose.

It wears out, too, the man who gives way to it, just as anger—excitement of internal manufacture—if the racket be constant enough, palsies the nerves and shatters the strongest frame. Like all keen stimulants, it loses its effect unless the dose is repeatedly increased, and the man who has lived for excitement exhausts its supplies and in the end sinks into the dullest of mortals.

But, though excitement overdone defeats its own ends, and though to most of us mild change would bring all the relief from the tameness of life which we require, few of us would care to forego the zest and stirring up which a surrender to occasional excitement brings. It is the condiment which gives piquancy to life.

THE proud heart is the first to sink before contempt; it feels the wound more keenly than any other can. There is nothing in language that can express the deep humiliation of being received with coldness when kindness is expected—of seeing the look, but half concealed, of strong disapprobation from such as we have cause to feel beneath us not alone in vigor of mind and spirit, but even in virtue and truth.

HUMAN nature is not so depraved as to hinder us from respecting goodness in others, though we ourselves want it. This is the reason why we are so charmed with the pretty prattle of children, and even the expressions of pleasure or uneasiness in some parts of the brute creation. They are without artifice or malice; and we love truth too well to resist the charm of sincerity.

BE indifferent to nothing which has any relation to the welfare of men. Be not afraid of diminishing your own happiness by seeking that of others. Devise liberal things, and let not avarice shut up your hand from giving to him that needeth, and to promote the cause of piety and humanity.

AN essential element of happiness is moderation and calmness. The serene, as the wise ancients knew, is at once that which is placid and that which is celestial. The real and wholesome enjoyments of man are not things to be overtaken by racing.

To be flattered is grateful, even when we know that our praises are not believed by those who pronounce them; for they prove at least our power, and show that our favor is valued, since it is purchased by the meanness of falsehood.

THERE are some persons who never succeed, from being too indolent to attempt anything; and others who regularly fail, because the instant they find success in their power they grow indifferent and give over the attempt.

ONE great trouble in doing a mean action is that you are compelled to associate with yourself afterwards. If you could only have nothing to do with a man who was guilty of such meanness, it would be a relief.

IT is error that dwarfs the intellect, narrows the range of thought, poisons the moral feelings, and corrupts the life.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

REJECTED.—"Pouring oil on troubled waters," is not a quotation, but a proverbial saying, like some others which have no special source, being found in identical shape in several languages.

O. C. H.—We cannot give you the average consumption of coal by the Atlantic liners, but the City of Rome one of the largest, consumes about three hundred tons of coal every twenty-four hours while on voyage.

MERMAID.—It is a fact that hair often grows luxuriantly in weakly persons, and there are instances in which it has grown after death; but it does not necessarily indicate a weakly constitution, and need not be injurious if worn loosely.

THEOPHILUS.—The needle of the compass points to the magnetic pole, not to the north pole. The magnetic pole is somewhere north-west of Hudson's Bay. So in places east of the meridian of the magnetic pole the needle points a little west of north.

ARLINE B.—When applied to physical matters there is no difference between the words "broad" and "wide." A broad plain is the same as a wide plain. But "broad" is applied to mental or immaterial things, as well as to physical, as: broad fun, a broad joke, etc.

CANADA.—Good clear ice two inches thick will bear men to walk on; the same, four inches thick, will bear horses and riders; the same, six inches thick, will bear horses and with moderate loads; the same, ten inches thick, will bear a pressure of 1,000 pounds per square foot.

A. T. T.—Chili extends from within 12 degrees of the Antartic Circle to the hot parched districts of the Tropic of Capricorn, so that the harvests are more forward in some parts than in others, but generally it may be said that spring commences in September, summer in December, autumn in March, and winter in June.

ANNIE B.—You will be lucky if you never have any more serious troubles than those you relate. You evidently are, as you say, too young to know your own mind. Do not tie yourself to the young man unless you are quite sure that you care for him. Playing at courtship is always a mistake, and you can afford to wait. As to the annoyance you speak of, we are quite sure that any woman who cares to stand on her dignity can snub impertinence without speaking.

PRACTICE.—Ease when in company can be attained only by practice, if you are self-conscious. It is like public speaking; with some people the brain and muscles never seem to have free play in strange circumstances. You may sit comfortably in another man's house, chatting unreservedly, when the strange thought flashes across you, "How different this from last year, when I sat here tongue-tied, fettered, gawky!" You can only grow into such ease; if you force yourself, you will act awkwardly.

ALICE B.—The Lombards were the first money-lenders in England, and those who borrowed money from them deposited some security or pawn; the Medici family, whose arms were three gilded pills, in allusion to their profession of medicine, were the richest merchants of Florence and the greatest money-lenders; it is from the Lombard family that the sign has been appropriated by pawnbrokers; until the reign of Elizabeth the bankers of Lombard Street appear to have exercised a monopoly in pawnbroking.

FLORA MACDONALD.—You write like a brave little woman. One does not want to think too much about the "drabness"—a good word—of life, but to live in the joy and excitement of other people when we have not much of our own. The time comes when we have to watch the acting rather than act ourselves; and, if we get into that frame of mind early, it saves us from a good deal of discontent. The question wrapped up in your letter, "At what age is a woman an old maid?" would afford an interesting discussion. Some women show the characteristic signs of spinsterhood when they are twenty-five; some not till they are forty; some never. We do not think you will fret yourself into a sour and shriveled state for many a year, judging by your letter, and hope you will have no need.

READER.—Stars do not shoot. What are commonly called stars are of two sorts—first planets, of which there are half a dozen visible, our earth being one—they shine with a steady light—they are worlds; then there are the many twinkling stars, which are suns and are immensely larger than our earth. These planets and suns go on in quite an orderly way, and could not shoot without making a fearful commotion. The streaks of shooting light which you refer to are caused by meteoric stones. There are great numbers of these stones, of varying sizes, careering about through space. How they came there is a mystery. Some think there have been collisions between planets, and that fragments have scattered far and wide; others think the meteorites have been flung forth from the great volcanoes which kept up such a lively bombardment in the early days while the crust of the earth was cooling rapidly. Meteoric stones occasionally whizz past the earth or fall on it. When they plunge into the earth's thick atmosphere out of the rarety of space, the friction makes them glow; and that is what you see—a small meteorite burning as it rushes through our atmosphere. Do not call them stars. The earth is an insignificant little place compared with the stars, and the meteorites are as nothing compared with the earth—they are only the flying dust of the heavens.

BY THE WAY.

BY J. M. L.

Along the country roadside, stone on stone,
Past waving grain fields, and near broken stile,
The walls stretch onward an uneven pile,
With rankling vines and lichen overgrown;
So stand they sentinel. Unchanged, alone,
They're left to watch the seasons passing slow;
The summer's twilight, or the winter's snow,
The springtime's birdling, or the autumn's moan.
Who placed the stones now gray with many years?
And did the rough hands tire, the sore hearts ache?
The eyes grow dim with all their weight of tears?
Or did the work seem light for some dear sake?
Those lives are over. All their hopes and fears
Are lost, like shadows in the morning-break.

Teddy's Skating Party.

BY C. MILMAN.

"HOW shall we go, mamma?"

"Settle it all exactly as you like, my dear; I shall go with Sir John."

A general laugh greeted Lady Theresa's remark. It was not a witty remark, but the party at Clover Court had a standard of witticism peculiarly their own, and unintelligible often to outsiders.

Lady Theresa Thoyte's house-parties were well known, and a trifle clique-y. No one who was not youthful and cheerful and well-dressed, in a word, "smart," was admitted; except once a year, when General Thoyte had what Lady Theresa called a "field-day." Then he invited the guests. They consisted of his two maiden aunts, aged respectively eighty and eighty-two; a local poet, who lived on a ruined reputation and a few withered laurels; the bishop of the diocese and his female relations, and General Thoyte's solicitor.

Lady Theresa had no daughters, but her four daughters-in-law called her "mamma." Two were staying at Clover Court—Mrs. Arnold and Mrs. Teddy—whose husbands were respectively numbers two and four in the Thoyte family. Mrs. Arnold, or Flu as she was usually called, was short, and a brilliant brunette. Mrs. Teddy was babyish and fair.

It was Mr. Teddy who made her remark aforesaid—"How shall we go, mamma?"

It was winter-time. Covert-shooting was fairly over, and Clover Court was not in a good hunting country. Moreover, a frost had set in, which would have stopped any hunting, even that of Diana herself.

The topic of the hour was skating—skating that included an elaborate hot picnic and a band. It was to be a new sort of party, specially devised by Mrs. Teddy. Her fair doll-like face and soft fluffy curls were but the outward mask of a very strongly self-concentrated nature. There was a certain rocky element in Mrs. Teddy that enabled her to withstand all petulant waves of emotion or discussion with a passive resistance that always ended in victory.

As her own lord and master chose to go and hunt in Northamptonshire, she determined to amuse herself in her own way; and her present amusement was flirting with a certain sheepish young man, who owned a coach, a courtesy title, and a yacht!

The party were to drive in couples to a distant mere, each pair as carefully selected as if for a dinner party.

"Mamma" had a chronic admirer of the heavy order, a certain Sir John O'Grady, who came to Clover Court every year as regularly as his gout and the Bath doctors would allow him.

"Sir John and Lady Theresa" was a recognized witticism that always drew peals of laughter.

"Who will be my partner at whist?" said Lady Theresa each evening, and "Sir John" was the invariable reply of her guests; and to do him justice, he was always ready to take his part with the best grace possibly.

General Thoyte slept the whole evening, so he did not count as audience, nor add to the hilarity.

"Well, is it all settled?" said Mrs. Teddy again. She had a knack of returning to her point. "Mamma is disposed of in her own pony-carriage, likewise Flu and Bertram Mackenzie in the dog-cart, Arnold and Rose Delamere in his trap, and Lord Edwin will drive me in his curricle—so we are all disposed of."

"You have forgotten Miss Vere."

"Who is Miss Vere, mamma?"

"Cousin Louisa comes this evening, and has asked to bring a Miss Vere with her. Goodness knows who she is."

"Oh, law!" Mrs. Teddy was not choice in her expressions in unguarded moments. "Cousin Loo don't matter; she never goes out before luncheon, and abjures picnics as if they were heretical. But this Miss Vere——"

"Leave her behind," suggested Flu practically.

"Can't offend Cousin Louisa," said Lady Theresa in her sleepy voice.

"I know," said Mrs. Teddy triumphantly, "Arnold has chosen to ask Colonel Rolleton: let him drive her to Fansham Mere."

"That horrid man?" Lady Theresa hardly raised her voice, she was patting her pug's back violently; it suffered from a deeply asthmatical cough.

"Well, he must be sober in the morning; and, after all, he can't shock Miss What's-her-name much in an hour's drive. She will probably never meet him again. If she is Cousin Louisa's sort she won't understand him, and she'll think him very clever. Mistake him for a regular scientific bounder, you know."

The usual Clover Court laughter echoed Mrs. Teddy's latest brilliant remark.

"That is the only conclusion of the whole matter, mamma; either Miss Vere must stay behind, or she must go with Colonel Rolleton. He is coming here at eleven o'clock to start with us."

The conclave that had assembled in Lady Theresa's boudoir broke up. It was time to give "the men" their tea.

"The men" consisted of Captain Arnold Thoyte, Bertram Mackenzie—a brother officer, Lord Edwin, and, of course, Sir John. General Thoyte never drank tea; "on principle," he said. He did not explain on what principle, except that he called it "wash," so possibly he connected it with an Anglo-Jewish dislike to pigs and their mode of life.

Just before the dressing-bell sounded a carriage drove up, and disgorged Miss Louisa Thoyte, an heiress and spinster of more than uncertain age, her maid, her cage of rare foreign birds, and a slender, pale-faced girl, who blinked wearily at the brightly-lighted hall.

"No one to meet me at the station! No one at the front door! How very odd. Is any one ill?" This from Miss Thoyte to the butler.

"No, m'm, not as I'm aware on. Her ladyship's in the drawing-room; I don't think she heard the bell, but she is expecting of you, m'm. Your train is late!"

"Yes, my train was late, extraordinary late. I shall write to the superintendent of the line about it. Lilian," in a loud whisper, "have you my little bag? I should like to give the butler a temperance tract; he looks as if he drank."

"I think we gave the last tract to the cabman at Paddington; that man with the red face, who used such bad language when you paid him, and said: "Call yourself a lady, and only give me tuppence a box! A dressed-up guy!"

"I should have given him in charge if we had not been so late; as it I shall write to the superintendent of the police about him. I took his number on the back of my ticket. By-the-way, I gave that up. Remind me to ask the station-master at Fansham for it. Now come into the drawing-room."

Even as she spoke the door opened, and a tide of people and voices flowed into the hall, all exclaiming and declaiming at once; and it was fully ten minutes before the weary travelers reached the seclusion of the upper landing.

"I hope you have given me the blue-room, Theresa. I can't sleep in any other room."

"I couldn't put you in the blue-room, dear Louisa," answered her cousin-in-law in her sleepy fat tones, "it is already occupied by Lord Edwin. But parrot-room is quite as comfortable," opening a door as she spoke.

"It is not. And the birds clinging upside down on the paper make me feel sick. I am sure the room is damp: that housekeeper of yours looks a noodle. What is that on the wall?" Miss Thoyte pointed triumphantly to two large marks. "That is damp, or I am much mistaken."

"The stupid workmen put half the paper upside down, and the General tried to pull it off, but he only spoilt it, and we had to paste on odd bits. If you think the room is damp, Louisa, you can go into the blue-room."

"But you have just said that is occupied by Lord Something-or-other, Theresa. I always said you would have softening of the brain, and, upon my word, I think I am right."

"We can change Lord Edwin's things to this room, he would not mind the parrots," explained Lady Theresa, apparently quite unmoved by Miss Thoyte's prophecies, though she complained placidly afterwards to Sir John that "the General's relations were very trying, and Louisa the worst of the lot."

"And where is Miss Vere's room? She must be facing south on account of the birds. Have you brought the bronchitis kettle, Lilian, in case they catch cold?"

"Yes, I have everything, I think. I should like to go and unpack, if I may find my room."

"She is the daughter of my rector," explained Miss Thoyte, in a loud whisper, as the girl left the room, still laden with bag and bird-cage. "I took a great fancy to last week, and she never giggles, so I am taking her about with me. I go to the Reginald Thoytes on Saturday."

The Reginald Thoytes were rivals in the competition for Louisa Thoyte's money, so Lady Theresa looked on all their advances with suspicion.

"You had better stay here, Louisa; Regie's house is so cold, it is on clay."

"Not the house, Theresa, only the stable. They have had it scientifically examined, and the house is on gravel, except, perhaps, the kitchen. And it is warmed and lit throughout with electric light."

"Warmed by electric light?"

"No, lit. I said lit by electric light."

"I think it is very unsafe," protested Lady Theresa, feebly; "it will blow you up some day. You'll catch your foot in the wires and break your leg, and it is so bad for the eyes. You had better stay here."

"You had better go, Theresa, or I shall never be dressed for dinner. Eugenie, ouvrez la porte pour Miladi."

Dinner that night was a failure. Not the viands, for they were thoughtfully chosen and delicately cooked, but conversation languished. Mrs. Teddy resumed her part of ingenue, and no one spoke more than was absolutely necessary to keep up a polite fiction of enjoyment. Miss Vere looked pale and languid in an unbecoming black tea-gown, and was voted a dowdy by women and a stick by the men. Lord Edwin ventured a few remarks to her, but was speedily brought back metaphorically to his beloved's feet by a skilfully-planted smile and gentle look of injured innocence.

The morning dawned redly and frostily. A typical skating-day, with little wind and a clear white sky, that would presently be blue and shining under the genial presence of the wintry sun.

Cousin Louisa withdrew to her own room after breakfast, and all breathed a sigh of relief.

"Cat, cat, double-distilled cat," murmured Mrs. Teddy in Lord Edwin's ear; "I do not envy that girl dancing attendance on her all day."

"No, poor girl, by Jove!" exclaimed his lordship; he had a kindly heart for all his stunted height and foolish pasty face.

"Oh, why poor girl, when she comes to Clover Court? I daresay her home is rather different. I don't suppose she is a lady."

"Is she really going to drive with that horrid Colonel Rolleton Dolly?" asked Mrs. Arnold, who was good-natured when it cost her nothing.

"Yes, mamma said so. There is no other way, unless she stays at home all the morning."

The various members of the expedition assembled on the doorstep, and carts, traps, and carriages were being led up and down by coachmen and helpers. Skates and wraps were packed, huge baskets filled a game-cart, all was bustle and preparation.

Just as Lady Theresa was preparing to climb, with deliberate heaviness, into the low pony-carriage, in which Sir John was already sitting, a black-robed figure appeared in the doorway.

"If you please, Lady Theresa, Miss Thoyte says there is such a draught in her room she cannot possibly sit there. Would you send at once for the carpenter and the glazier——"

"The butcher, and baker, and candlestick-maker," quoted Mrs. Teddy, who was standing beside her. "My good girl, we are all just starting for the picnic: Lady Theresa cannot possibly see about draughts just now." (In fact the pony-carriage had already gone.) "Pin up some blankets over the door and shut the shutters, send for lamps, and hermetically close the keyholes, and, above all, go and dress. We are to start at eleven, and you will be late."

"Am I going?"

"Yes: can you skate?" Mrs. Teddy climbed lightly and skilfully into Lord Edwin's curricle and tucked a fur rug round her knees. As the high dog-cart with its stepping bays drove off, Lilian caught the words: "——Rolleton will bring you. Be ready for him."

She was left alone, the rest of the party had melted away; and, with the word "skating" ringing in her ears, Miss Vere ran up the shallow oak stairs two steps at a time, and with a hasty message to Miss Thoyte, who was in the hands of her French maid, that "Lady Theresa would see about the draughts," scrambled quickly into her well-worn black jacket and hat and thick laced-up boots.

When she returned to the front door, fully conscious of her defects beside the smartly fur-trimmed and velvet-jacketed ladies who had preceded her, a low, wooden dog-cart was coming up the drive.

It was driven by a tall man in spectacles, pale-faced and stooping, in seedy brown coat and deer-stalker cap. Raising his cap politely to the solitary figure on the door-step, he began: "Is Lady Theresa——"

"They have started," said Lilian; somehow she does not feel shy of this shabby, sad-looking man. "Mrs. Teddy said you would drive me; at least"—seeing his look of surprise—"if your name is Rolleton? I caught the name Rolleton, I think."

"My name is Rolleton," he said simply, "but I think they must have meant my brother, Colonel Rolleton; he was to have joined the skating-party I believe; but he—well, in fact, he is not quite well this morning, and as I was driving to a distant farm, I brought his excuses. But have you no other means of going to Fansham Mere? Has Lady Theresa left you alone?"

"Yes. I am a stranger, you see. I only came with Miss Louisa Thoyte last night, and I imagine that the party had been planned beforehand. It does not matter at all. I shall go for a walk; perhaps there is a pond near."

"Are you fond of skating?" His eye had noticed the skates that hung from her wrist.

"Yes, I like it better than anything. I was at school in Dresden for some years, and so I learned to skate better than I could have done in England."

"If you will allow me, I will drive you to Fansham Mere. It is almost on my way, and I can go on and come back for you. Jump in," he continued kindly. "Are you well wrapped up? That coat does not look very warm."

"It is the only one I have," said Lilian very simply. "There are four of us at home, and cannot have many new clothes."

"Where is home?" This pale sad-faced man asked abrupt questions; but his eyes were kind, and Lilian felt more at ease with him than with the two dandified officers and fatuous Lord Edwin.

"In Lincolnshire. My father's name is Vere, and he is rector of Thackstolme. Miss Thoyte lives at Thackstolme Court, you know."

"Vere? That name is familiar to me. There was a don at Oxford of that name, who coached me for a year. Is your father's name Henry?"

"Yes. We lived in Oxford till I was fourteen, then we moved to the rectory, and I went abroad to study music and languages. I shall have go to out and teach when I am five-and-twenty."

"Are you any good at music?" He looked into his companion's face as he spoke, and was startled at the glow on her cheeks produced by the keen air, by the brightness of her eyes and her sweet smile.

"I might have been a professional," she answered briefly, "if we could have afforded more lessons. I studied with—— and——," naming two of the best foreign masters of technique.

"There is not a soul who cares for music about here. Can you come to Rolleton Manor and play to me? My sister will be delighted to invite you."

"I am only a visitor for a few days at Clover Court; besides, I am there only on sufferance with Miss Thoyte."

"I will ask the whole party to dinner," he said coolly. "We do not entertain now, not since—not since my wife died," he continued simply; "but I have no doubt that Lady Theresa will arrange something if I ask her.

He speaks rather autocratically, thought Lilian; and then they fell into animated talk over music, and Brahms' latest productions, until, by a sharp turn of the wooded road, they came on to a bright scene.

A sheet of water, black, shining, stretched away indefinitely, dotted with small groups of skaters, some brilliant touches of red in cloak or hat adding color to the

picture. On the left bank rose lofty pines and bare drooping willows, underneath them the dead bracken rustled brown and sere. The mid-day sun shone on the twigs lightly tipped with hoar-frost. A robin, perched on the ice near some chairs, and fearless from hunger, pecked vainly for crumbs.

Handing the reins to his groom, Lilian Vere's charioteer jumped out, and conducted her to Lady Theresa, who sat, a mountain of fur and rugs, with her feet on a hot charcoal arrangement.

"Dear me, Lord Rolleton, this is most unexpected! I am so glad to see you again. And Miss——er, Miss Vere, how did you come to be with Lord Rolleton?"

Lilian flushed really. "I was told to come with some one who would be at Clover Court at eleven, and I only caught the name Rolleton; and then this—this gentleman kindly brought me, as his brother was ill."

"The colonel ill?" inquired Sir John, who sat, another mountain of fur and rugs, by Lady Theresa's side. "Sorry to hear that, my lord, but glad to see you again. Long time since I saw you, not in fact—not——"

"Not since my wife died," said Rolleton calmly.

Meanwhile, Lady Theresa was apologising profusely for the trouble he had taken in bringing Miss Vere to the picnic. Nor could she believe her ears when Lord Rolleton assured her he had much enjoyed his drive, and wished to cultivate Miss Vere's acquaintance.

"I knew her father up at Oxford, and she tells me she plays. You know I am devoted to music: will you all come to dinner to-morrow? my sister will be delighted to see you."

Lord Rolleton forgot his intended visit to an outlying farm, and stayed on by Lady Theresa's side. He was no skater, but joined the luncheon-party, and admired Miss Vere's brilliant color and sparkling eyes. She was in her element, and the other women watched her enviously as she skimmed gracefully up and down, or cut intricate figures; and "the men" positively squabbled for the honor of waltzing with her.

Lord Rolleton insisted on driving her back to Clover Court.

Mrs. Teddy was sold, and said so frankly.

"Just think of that girl's luck! The most exclusive and richest man in the country, and said to be inconsolable! And she got him to drive her here, instead of that tipsy brother, the colonel! Artful little minx!"

The dinner-party at Rolleton Manor, as planned by Lord Rolleton, came off the next day, and the host devoted himself, with characteristic simplicity, to Miss Vere, and was not disappointed, but, indeed, charmed by her masterly performance on the pianoforte.

Miss Vere, the despised protegee of "Cousin Louisa,"—who, worldly old woman as she was, looked on hugely pleased at the girl's success,—took her host's plainly-expressed admiration very quietly.

"He is the most outspoken man I ever met, but his eyes are so kind. I felt he was a friend directly I saw him yesterday," she said to Mrs. Teddy when they returned to Clover Court.

"She must have known who he was somehow and made up to him from the first," said Mrs. Teddy to Lord Edwin; but Mrs. Teddy professed great friendship ever after for Lilian Vere, when her marriage to Lord Rolleton was an accomplished fact, and told every one she had made the match.

However, Lord Rolleton said to his wife, in what she called "his autocratic way," that he did not approve of Mrs. Teddy, or of the Clover Court people generally. And when Miss Louisa Thoyte left the bulk of her money to Lilian Rolleton there was war to the knife for a time between the two houses.

Miss Jocelyn's Joke.

BY C. DENING.

MISS JOCELYN is looking out of the window. It is a drenching day, and there is nothing to be seen but the garden, with its heavy-headed roses drooping under the downpour, and the village street beyond, now fast becoming a rapid watercourse, down which fleets of bubbles sail and burst only to be replaced instantly by fresh ones.

"I call this the dullest place in existence," said Miss Jocelyn, half aloud—"the very dullest!" She does not finish her sentence, but turns to the massive pier-glass to look at the reflection of herself—a handsome girl in a smart frock. After one glance, she turns back to the window with a sigh. "What's the use? One might as well wear sackcloth trimmed with ashes in this place for all the people there are to see one's gowns. It was much more fun at school, after all. Why"—suddenly craning forward—"if that isn't that frumpy little Miss Blake with Mr. Stanford; and he is holding his umbrella over her! She has got his arm too! I wonder how he likes it! Poor man—I wonder if he ever notices whether a woman is old and plain or young and pretty!" And Miss Jocelyn casts a fleeting glance at the mirror again. "What a little fright she is! They say her sister is a Tartar, and makes her dress like that. I should like to see anybody making me wear such things? And how she minces along, picking her way and holding up that hideous plaid skirt, as if she wouldn't be glad and thankful to spoil it! He doesn't pick his way much. Now he's gone splash into another puddle; and she is actually looking up at him and blushing and laughing. Oh, what a joke! Fancy her blushing! Why, she must be forty if she's a day—quite forty! And all those littlecurls bobbing about as she goes! I wonder if she is in love with him. Poor old soul!"

From the side of the bow-window there is an extensive view of the village street, and Miss Jocelyn opens the window and leans out, disregarding the dropping of water from the creepers upon her new gown in her anxiety to see everything that is to be seen.

Mr. Stanford is a curate; but he is a man first and afterwards a cleric. Strong, manly, gentle, he plays cricket with the village boys, is ready to gossip for a few moments with the old gaffers, is a member of the debating society as well as of the rowing club. He is an athlete who cares for more than athletics, an intellectual man whose horizon is not bounded by mere book-learning, a man whose soul and mind and body are equally cared for, and who is anxious that the souls and minds and bodies of others shall be well cared for too.

But Miss Jocelyn cannot appreciate all this. She is young, and is not yet able to grasp more than the fact that she is better looking and better dressed than most of the girls whom she knows. So to her Ruth Blake is a ridiculous sight, and Mr. Stanford's quiet courtesy, which he would extend just as readily and pleasantly to his washerwoman, is a good joke. She watches them part at the Misses Blake's little green gate, and thinks she can see Miss Ruth's upward glance and smile at the fine face above her before Mr. Stanford turns and comes striding and splashing back through the puddles.

Then, having nothing else to do, Miss Jocelyn plans a pretty little piece of mischief, which she promptly sets about carrying out. She has one gift, this handsome Miss Jocelyn; she is very skilful with her pen, and, after a little practice, can imitate almost any handwriting. She and her schoolfellows used to get great fun out of this gift of hers. And now she remembers that there is in the study a letter of Mr. Stanford's to her father, and her eyes sparkle with delight.

"What fun to send poor old Miss Blake a love-letter! Perhaps she has never had one. It will be a kindness, positively! Oh, if only one of the girls were here to enjoy the joke with me! What delightful complications there may be! How she will blush and simper—silly old thing! Well, serve her right! When there are so few young men in a place, what business have old maids strolling about with them under umbrellas?"

Miss Jocelyn's thoughts run fast, but her dexterous figures move slowly and carefully.

* * * * * *

"Miss Cornelia's a-lying down, Miss Ruth. She have one of her bad headaches, and she says as how no one is to disturb her. And your tea is ready and waiting, miss."

Ruth Blake turns into the prim little dining-room, seats herself upon one of the straight-backed chairs, and begins to draw off her brown-cotton gloves. She is an odd little figure, small and slim, and dressed in a hideous antiquated plaid, with shades of glaring blue and green; yet her fair hair—which the wind and rain have ruffled and made to look like a halo about her meek small face—the patient curve of her lips, and her slightly-flushed cheeks, render the appearance not altogether unpleasing.

She eats her simple tea quickly, glancing from time to time at a book which she has propped up against the milk-jug—a book Mr. Stanford mentioned incidentally one day, and which she has obtained from the village library. She wades on patiently, floundering a little in the more difficult passages, but getting along pretty well on the whole, till a ray of sunlight breaks suddenly into the room, and the book grows duller than ever.

Miss Ruth lays it aside, and wanders out into the long narrow strip of garden at the back of the house, which is by Miss Cornelia's orders nearly all devoted to vegetables. But a pink rose climbs up the house-wall, and on the garden step stands an old stone filter, overflowing with golden stone-crop.

Miss Ruth Blake bends over it lovingly. When it ceased to be useful any longer as a filter, she rescued it from the dustman's clutches, filled it with mould, and planted the moss; and now, instead of a commonplace filter, it has become a fountain full to the brim and running over with golden glory. The roses are shattered by the rainstorm; she raises their heavy heads and shakes the drops from them. One or two of the over-blown ones fall at her feet, but she only smiles; presently however she comes to a bud that has withered on its stem.

It was pink and full like the others once, and promised well; but, instead of opening its heart more and more, it has grown brown and faded, and remains an unopened bud still. Miss Ruth's lips are compressed tightly, and she tenderly touches the hard brown bud, and eyes it sympathetically, as if she could feel for it and with it in some odd way.

"Miss Ruth," the little maid cries from the door, "Miss Cornelia wants you at once!"

* * * * * *

The next morning Miss Ruth gets a letter. She knows the handwriting upon the envelope before she opens it.

"Parish matters, of course," she says to herself. "Perhaps it's about the school treat."

She opens the envelope, unfolds the note within, and is reading it slowly, when suddenly she utters a low cry, her breath comes fast, and the familiar world about her grows in a moment strange and unreal.

For it is a love-letter. She is thirty-three; and this is her very first. And from such a man—the man whom she has looked up to and reverenced and followed so humbly and modestly ever since she first saw him! She goes down to breakfast with a flushed face, quivering lips, and radiant eyes.

"Miss Cornelia's just on the ramp this morning, miss," says the little maid warningly, as she meets Ruth in the narrow passage that does duty for a hall.

Miss Ruth nods and smiles as if this were the pleasantest intelligence possible. Cornelia's diatribes this morning fall upon heedless ears. Ruth answers at intervals, "Yes; dear," and "No, dear," and "I will see to it, sister," as in duty bound; but her heart and soul are filled with one thought—that wonderful letter.

After breakfast, Miss Cornelia goes out to visit her district. Then Miss Ruth takes up her pen and writes tremblingly out of the fulness of her heart.

"Dear Mr. Stanford—Your letter has surprised me very much. I scarcely know what to say, except that I am most grateful to you. It is so good of you to love me as you say you do; and love has always seemed such a beautiful thing to me, though I never thought that it was likely to come to either my sister or me. But I am very, very glad to have had your letter, and shall always be so, even if you change your mind, for, indeed, I am not worthy of all the kind things you say of me. Still, whatever happens, I shall always feel happy to know that you once thought as you have written. And I beg you will think the matter over well. Though it seems impertinent of me to advise you, yet I think only of your good. And I am, always your faithful friend, "RUTH BLAKE."

She reads the letter over several times, and then shakes her head.

"How poorly I have said it!" she thinks. "But he is so kind; he will understand that I mean well."

She sends the letter to the post, and then, with a calm mind, sets about making a rolypoly pudding.

"Mr. Stanford will decide," she says to herself.

The curate, when he receives the gentle humble epistle, is filled with dismay. He paces wildly up and down his small sitting-room.

"Somebody has played a cruel heartless trick upon that poor little woman, and I have to face her and tell her so. I would rather be shot!" He drinks his scalding tea in great gulps, and is glad of the pain it causes him. "Oh, what a thing to have to do—what a cruel thing! And it must be done at once—this very night. I cannot leave her under this delusion a moment longer than I can avoid. But what am I to do? Go and tell a woman—a kind gentle little lady—coarsely and brutally to her face that she has been played with and insulted, that I never dreamed of loving her, that it is impossible for me to do so? Oh, cruel and cowardly! How can I strike a gentlewoman, or indeed any woman, such a blow as that?"

He rests his head upon his hands and groans. After a while he reads the letter over again slowly. He reads between the lines, and seems to see a soul laid bare before him. She loved him, and he realizes how much that means for her. What a new flood of light has been poured suddenly upon that sad, unselfish life! The world will never be the same again to her when she knows—when he he has told her, as he must. And there is no help for either of them. He must do it! Well, then, let it be done at once.

Mechanically he takes his hat down from its peg and goes out into the street, walking with his head bent down, seeing nothing, hearing nothing until he is close to the little green gate; then a child's clear high voice reaches his ears.

"My g'annie made it," she says. "Ain't it pitty?"

"It's a beautiful doll," a gentle voice answers. "Is it a good baby?"

"Welly, dood," the child says, tucking the rag doll under one chubby arm. "Dive me a wose, please!"

Miss Ruth plucks one of the few remaining June roses, one of the prettiest, and puts it into the little outstretched hand.

"Two kisses to pay," she says, laughing. She is the sort of woman that wins every child's heart.

Mr. Stanford knits his brow, bites his lip, and clenches his hand tightly to resist the coward impulse that prompts him to hurry away.

As she turns to look after the child, Miss Ruth sees him and pauses shyly. Something has to be said, so he comes forward.

"What a lovely evening!" he exclaims, though he scarcely knows whether it rains or whether the sun shines.

"Yes," she answers. "Won't you—— Were you—— Will you come in?"

"If you please."

He followed her into the house with an intense longing for something, however dreadful, to happen to him and save him from what is to follow. Ruth takes him into the dining-room. He feels vaguely that his task is becoming more difficult. In the bare chill little drawing-room he could have said his say better.

But she has brought him straight into the sanctuary of her home; and again he feels oddly that her life has open before him. There is her work lying folded together. What a tiny thimble! Does it really fit her? He glances down at her small bare hands; she was taken off her ugly gloves. What a bit of a woman for a strong man to fight! What a gentle life to be marred and shattered by bitter shame!

"Won't you sit down?" she says gently. "Sister is out."

Still Mr. Stanford does not speak, but stands there before her, looking very pale. His back is to the window and she cannot see his face well, but the light shines full upon hers.

"I did not show sister your letter," she goes on hesitatingly. "I thought I had better wait—that perhaps you would change your mind, think differently about it all, and then it would be best that only we two should know."

She does not say a word about changing her own mind. She stands there before him, a sweet fair woman in spite of her old-fashioned gown and her oddly-arranged hair. She looks at him with smiling steadfast eyes and bids him take or leave her as pleases him best. And his courage to hurt, wound, perhaps kill her, fails him. In a moment his resolution is taken. He strides hastily forward.

"Ruth, do you love me?" he asks, holding out his hands. And the calm of her face breaks up as she sinks into his arms.

"Oh, so much—so much!" she almost sobs. "But I am not worthy of you. You should marry some one ever—ever so much better and younger and prettier than I! Do you know"—hiding her shamed face and confessing it as she would have confessed a sin—"I am three-and-thirty?"

"And I am thirty-four," he answers. "Dreadful—isn't it?"

* * * * * *

When Miss Jocelyn hears the news, she

goes away suddenly on a visit to some friends.

* * * * * * *

Three years have passed, and Laura Jocelyn is older, sadder, wiser. She has loved and suffered and learned to sympathize with others. But she had never seen Mr. Stanford or his old-maid wife again. When she returned home, the marriage was over and they were gone to his new living.

"That was the worst thing I ever did," she says sadly to herself. "I will go and confess, and tell him how sorry I am. What a horrible thing to have ruined two lives!"

So she goes on her penitent errand to the small town forty miles away. On getting out of the train, she asks the way to the Vicarage, and walks there slowly. It will be very hard to make the confession, she thinks. How will he meet her? What will he say to her? Does Ruth know too?

A child's laugh startles her from her bitter musings; and she looks up and across the sweet-briar hedge that is in bloom at her side, for it is July again. She sees but dimly an old-fashioned garden, a quaint rambling house, for that is Mr. Stanford himself standing so close to her that she could almost touch him. And who is that lady, that pretty little woman in the dainty gray gown, her fair wavy hair knotted close to her head, and her eyes shining with happiness? With a gasp, Miss Jocelyn recognizes her, That is—no!—that was Ruth Blake.

"Now let him come to me," the little woman cries gaily. "Harry, you are spoiling the child! Let him come to his mother."

Ruth stoops down and holds out her arms, and a tiny figure in white rushes wildly for a little distance towards her, then totters unsteadily, and finally sits down plump upon the grass, the performance being hailed with a shout of laughter from the father, echoed more softly by Ruth.

Under cover of their mirth, Miss Jocelyn steals away. She has received forgiveness unasked, and she has the sense to see that to apologize to either of those two happy, blessed people would be an impertinence.

Frightening an Artist.

BY T. W. T.

THE precipice of Troll-Ness (Demon's Nose), forming the north-easternmost extremity of one of the smaller and more remote islets in the Orkney group, had always been considered quite unscalable from the sea. On the landward side, the brow of the cliff could be reached with tolerable ease by scrambling up a steep ridge of slippery turf interleaved with crumbling rock, which ended at last in a narrow three-cornered plateau more than 100 feet above the lashing waves that foamed and roared around the base of the headland. But the face of the precipice which overhung the sea either was, or appeared to be, so hopelessly perpendicular that the most daring cragsmen of the island had never even thought of trying it.

Probably it was just because nobody had ever attempted to climb it that this truculent crag enjoyed the reputation of being inaccessible, just as Gordon Cumming, the African lion hunter, used to say that crocodiles were supposed to be invulnerable because "raw sportsmen went out and fired at a crocodile and missed it, and then went home again and said that it was bullet proof." At all events, this was my own opinion when I had heard all about this formidable place from the old fisherman in whose hut I was lodging. I remembered that it was just that particular side of the Matterhorn which was supposed to be the most unscalable of all that finally led to the summit the bold climbers who had the hardihood to attempt it, and I secretly determined to "have a shy" at this impossible cliff myself.

The first thing to be done, of course, was to see with my own eyes what the redoubtable headland was like; and one fine bright afternoon, much more like an English summer than the early northern spring, I set out to do so.

When the tide was at the lowest, it left bare a narrow ledge of wet, slippery rock along the foot of the cliff, just wide enough for man at a time; and by this path I worked my way round to the base of the famous precipice, which certainly looked hopeless enough at first sight. The rock had been worn so perfectly smooth by the ceaseless chafing of the restless waves that, to all appearance, a cat could not have found footing there, much less a man; and, look as I might, I could see no possible way of scaling it.

"Hum!" thought I, "this doesn't look very promising. I'm afraid my expedition will be a regular case of 'there was nothing to do, and I did it.'"

But my attempt was not destined to end so uneventfully as I thought. I had already noticed vaguely an isolated spike or tusk of rock at the extremity of the headland, from which it was separated by a chasm as smooth and sheer and narrow as if cut by the slash of a sword.

By what strange convulsion of nature it had been torn from the main cliff it was useless to conjecture; but, in turning to depart, I suddenly perceived that the inner face of this strange pinnacle—which, although fully 100 feet in height, was not more than twelve or fifteen in thickness—was notched and indented in such a manner that it would be an easy affair for me, with my previous experience of crag climbing, to ascend it, even if I could not succeed in scaling its big neighbor.

Up I went accordingly, and at length (though not without more than one narrow escape) succeeded in reaching a small rocky platform about fifty feet up. Beyond this I could find no way of passing; so I seated myself on the platform, with my feet hanging over the edge, and began to look about me.

And in truth I found more than enough to look at—the wide, sunlit waters below, and the grim, black, broken precipices above, and the distant outline of the rocky shores winding away in an endless succession of stern, craggy heights with green sunny slopes between them, and the marvelous coloring of the long tassels of coiling seaweed which tapestried every cleft and cranny with rich velvety green, pale gold, or gorgeous crimson. But more striking than all were the snow-white armies of broad-winged seabirds, which, startled by my unaccustomed presence, rose flapping and shrieking around me by scores and hundreds, and circled overhead with wild, unearthly cries, as if the unquiet spirits of all whom these gloomy waters had engulfed were rising from their unknown graves once more.

So absorbed was I in this strange panorama that it was some time before I thought of looking down; and then I suddenly saw, with a secret thrill of dismay, that the tide had come up around the rock, and had quite cut me off from the shore!

This of itself would have mattered little, for I had swum a much greater distance in South America with my clothes tied upon my head; but, by this time, I had learned to look at the sea with an Orkneyman's eye, and I knew well that, although the waves did not seem particularly large or dangerous, any living thing which came within their deadly grasp would be instantly crushed to atoms against the merciless rocks around.

Nor was this all. One glance at the sky to windward showed me that a storm was rising, the first rush of which would suffice to whirl me headlong from my unsheltered perch down into the sea. To go up was impossible; to go down was certain death; to stay where I was seemed to be only an equally sure, though slower, form of destruction. What was to be done?

All at once I espied in the face of the main cliff (which fronted me from the other side of the chasm) a ledge similar to that on which I stood; and above it the precipice, quite smooth and unscalable below, was split by a slanting fissure, which seemed to make the ascent barely possible. Clearly, then, my only chance of escape was to leap across the gulf, and work my way up the face of the "inaccessible precipice."

It was a frightful leap, and I shrank from attempting it; but no other hope of life was now left to me. I shut my eyes, and launched myself desperately into the empty air.

When I felt my feet strike the opposite cliff, I clutched instinctively at whatever support was within reach, and just saved myself from sliding back into the abyss. But my troubles were only beginning yet; for I suddenly discovered that a smooth face of rock interposed itself between me and the cleft by which I intended to climb, and that the lower end of the fissure was several inches beyond the reach of my fingers, stretch and strain as I might.

But just as I was beginning to grow absolutely desperate, I caught sight of a large stone, which had broken away from the ledge, and now hung tottering on its brink. I pushed it close up to the rock, and standing upon it on tiptoe, just managed to get my fingers over the edge of the fissure, and drew myself up to it by main force, while the stone, dislodged by my spring, went thundering down into the sea, as if to give me a hint what I might except if I were to lose my footing.

The ascent that followed was like the vision of a troubled dream. I had a dim, confused sense of crawling wearily and painfully (like a fly along a wall) up a precipice which seemed to have no end—of gashing my fingers and tearing my clothes against sharp edges of rock—of hanging in mid air above the roaring sea, with my head growing sick and dizzy, and the strength dying out little by little from my bruised feet and aching hands. And all this while the angry glare of the sinking sun grew more and more red and stormy, while the deepening gloom of the coming tempest kept looming broader and blacker with every moment athwart the darkening sky. Plainly the storm was coming in earnest, and if it found me clinging to the face of that wind-swept precipice, I was a lost man.

But nothing earthly can last for ever except a law-suit or the chatter of a man who promises that he "won't detain you five minutes." The highest ledge was reached at last, and as I dragged myself wearily up on to the brow of the cliff, bruised, torn, bleeding, ragged, and sobbing from head to foot, I found myself unexpectedly face to face with a man in a plaid suit and broad-leaved hat, who, seated behind a light, portable easel, was hard at work sketching the sea view.

So absorbed was he in his task that he never heard the noise which I made in scrambling up on to the plateau beside him; but all at once, as he happened to look up from his work, there I stood before him on the brink of this unscalable precipice, a ghastly figure, gauntly outlined against the lurid glare of the stormy sunset. My face and hands were as black as ink from the slime of the rocks; my head and beard rough as a lion's mane; my clothes hanging about me in tatters, and plentifully stained with blood; and altogether I have not the least doubt that, seen in that wild place at that ghostly hour, I looked as hideous and unearthly as any demon of German melodrama.

As the sensation novelists are so fond of saying, "one glance was enough." Down went easel, brushes, and everything else, and away flew the electrified artist with such inconceivable speed that I had not even time to see which way he went. As for me, I sank down upon the turf, and laughed till what little strength I had left was fairly exhausted; and my old fisherman, when I told him the story that night over our supper of smoked fish and mutton broth, laughed at it quite as heartily as I did.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

London cabmen have to pass an examination in knowledge of London streets before they can obtain a license; and this is far more necessary than might be supposed, for nearly seven hundred men in the year 1889 failed in the examination, and that was not a severe one, while about twelve hundred were passed.

The rate of mortality of London is shown by a recent report to have steadily decreased with the introduction and perfection of adequate means of disposing of the sewage of the city. At the end of the eighteenth century the annual average mortality was estimated at 50 per 1000, and in 1850 it had dropped to 19.1 per 1000.

The Chinese are said to have been the originators of visiting cards. So long as the period of the Tang dynasty (619-907) visiting cards were known to have been in use in China. From ancient times to the present day the Chinese have observed the strictest ceremony with regard to the paying of visits. The cards which they use for this purpose are large and of a bright red color.

The national airs of great countries are short, while those of little countries are long. "God Save the Queen" is fourteen bars, the Russian hymn is sixteen bars, and "Hail Columbia" has twenty-eight bars. Siam's national hymn has seventy-six bars, and that of Uraguay seventy; Chile's forty-six, and so on. San Marino has the longest national hymn, except China, which is so long that people take half a day off to listen to it.

"It is a somewhat curious thing," observed a commercial traveler, "that even the most fastidious individual who will reject with indignation a tumbler that had been used by another diner at hotel, will not hesitate to drink out of a cup or glass on a railway train, although it may have been used by thousands of persons, many of them of not over cleanly habits. The same thing applies to the persons who use the ice-water coolers in public buildings or hotels. Why then should so much fastidiousness be displayed by persons at a hotel or other table as to the use of a tumbler from which a single person had previously drank?"

M. Bertillon, one of the chiefs in the police service of Paris is at work on the preparation of an illustrated dictionary of Anarchists of Paris and the provinces. The portraits of these enemies of society are arranged alphabetically and according to their physiognomical types, the Roman-nosed in one part and the Greek-nosed in another. A copy of the work will be sent to the police agents in various parts of France and other countries, whose duty it is to keep a watchful eye on the Anarchists and their doings.

A correspondent, referring to the curious fact that neither flies nor wasps will venture to pass through a window across which a piece of fish net is stretched, asserts that the phenomenon is due to the confused vision possessed by insects. The threads of the nets give them the impression of a continuous surface, just as with us do the hatchings of an engraving that we look at from a distance. The animal believes itself to be in front of a more or less translucent obstacle, but one in which it distinguishes no orifices.

Engineer A. R. Sutton, of Chicago, is the inventor of a scheme, that appears plausible, for connecting Chicago with the seaboard. He plans to deepen the Welland canal so as to permit vessels of 22 foot foot draft to pass to a point near Thorold, Ont., and from there to cut through to the Niagara river at a point just below the rapids. Then he would deepen the St. Lawrence river and Canadian channels along it to a point due north of Lake Champlain. Here he would cut a channel south to that lake, and from its southern point dig a canal to Troy or Albany. The Hudson river would then give egress to the Atlantic.

In France sealing wax has by no means gone out as a consequence of the introduction of gummed envelopes. There is even a sort of code or language of sealing wax among fashionable people. White sealing wax is chosen for communications relating to weddings, black for obituaries, violet for expressions of sympathy, chocolate for invitations to dinner, red for business, ruby for engaged lovers' letters, green for letters from lovers who live in hopes and brown for refusals of offers of marriage, white blue denotes constancy, yellow jealousy, pale green reproaches, and pink is used by young girls and gray between friends.

PATENTS.

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Our Young Folks.

THE LOST DOLLS.

BY E. A. F.

HUGHIE, I, and Jessie Maitland know such a lovely secret, and we want you to know it too, and help us."

"Well, what is it? Out with it, old lady. I can't help in the dark"; and down sat Hughie on the ground, to hear the budget.

They were out in the garden, among the bees, butterflies, buds, flowers, and April sunshine—he and his sister Madge.

"Well, it's all about dolls," began Madge.

"A mighty fine secret it must be, then," scoffed Hughie.

"It's lovely," said Madge. "Jessie Maitland's birthday's on May Day, and she intends to invite all the dolls she knows, and give them a May Day entertainment—choose a May Queen from among them, and all the rest."

"What shams you girls are! you and your secrets together."

"No, Hughie, no; and we are going to finish up with a picnic."

"For the dolls?"

"Yes; only we shall really eat the things, you know"—the boy gave a chuckle;—"and we want you to make a throne for the queen: just a chair with a step, not very large, you know; then we shall cover it with moss and wreaths of flowers. You will, won't you, Hughie? Jessie hasn't a brother to do it for her, you know."

"All right," promised Hughie; and he sauntered away that very day to look out some wood for this wonderful chair with a step—a doll's May Queen throne.

Busy as a bee was Hughie, in his workshop, for the next few days; equally busy was Madge, washing, ironing, and attending to her four dolls' wardrobes. Of course they could not all be queens, but the Lady Sophia—her grandmamma's last present—would stand a fair chance if she attended to her toilet; and she and her nurse went into town to buy ribbons, mock jewels, and the like, wherewith to deck her.

"Of course you'll have some boys at your party, or you'll have no fun?" remarked Hughie, as the days went round.

"Of course we shan't," was the decided answer. "Boys are spoil-sports."

"Well, tell me all about it; a throne-maker ought to know how the thing goes."

"I don't just know yet myself; Jessie is going to write me a note, and tell me," said Madge; and so the busy days went round again.

"Hurrah! here's the note for the May Queen nonsense," cried Hughie, rushing into the nursery, and waving the note high above his head. "Mr. Maitland's boy brought it, and I took it and ran up with it."

Whereupon Madge clapped her hands, and sat down at the table to read it, Hughie, boy-like, mounting up on the table, to hear the news.

"It is just lovely!" cried the little girl. "Listen."

"We shall meet at Sunny Bank—you know the place, dear—and choose the May Queen, and put her on her throne, settle about her maids of honor, and her fairies, and all the rest. Then we'll lay a picnic feast on the grass, and leave them to enjoy themselves, while we have a game of play. Papa has put up a splendid swing. Then we'll come back and eat all the good things ourselves, for of course it is all sham."

"Ha, ha! I said 'twas sham," laughed Hughie; and Madge tittered.

"Come this afternoon, dear, and help me, for I am as busy as busy—and bring the throne"; so the note ran.

"This afternoon" was the last in April.

"Sharp work you'll have for such an undertaking," remarked Hughie grandly, standing at the gate and watching his sister off, his work, that wonderful chair with a step, which was to do service for a throne, in her hand. And when the happy little maiden returned she said all was arranged lovely at Sunny Bank; she wished to-day was to-morrow, with no long night between.

To-morrow dawned without a cloud in the sky, and away she tripped, her four dolls packed in a perambulator. Rover the retriever, who liked to fetch and carry things for his little mistress, watched her off wistfully at the gate; but she waved him back. So he drooped his head and his tail, and crouched down like a sorrowful shadow. Many more girls with their dolls were abroad that morning, all bound for one meeting-place, Sunny Bank; all their hearts throbbing out one sweet refrain—"What if my doll should be chosen queen?"

Such a row of simpering beauties of dolls mustered at Sunny Bank, their eager mammas behind them, but who could choose the fairest without favor or affection? as they said. Jessie's papa, who knew no doll present, not even his own daughter's—he should be judge. Stalking through the wood, he came, looking very grave and serious, bearing the hamper of good things for the feast. Jessie had the box with the queen's robes, crown, and so on. Now came the grand moment; every little heart there went pit-a-pat as Mr. Maitland walked to and fro before the dolls.

"I say this fair lady," said he, tapping one with the twig he carried, and that was Madge's Lady Sophia.

If the rest were disappointed they bore it well, and Madge was not too exultingly happy; her hands trembled as she and Jessie arrayed the midge in her queenly garments, while the others chose her attendants. Then the feast was spread, the wee ladies seated, and looking as if they had all stepped out of some fairy tale. After that the little girls betook themselves to their swing, leaving the make-believe feasters—there was a swing for them, too, hard by, and a wee tent with cushions spread within for the dolls to rest by-and-by.

A winged hour flew, and when the little girls came back, oh, what confusion among the dolls at their feast! They lay this way and that, one with her heels in the jam, another her face in the jelly, and, worst of all, the queen was missing; there lay her crown at the foot of the throne; in fact, all Madge's dolls were gone.

Dismayed at the sight they all stood there, each seeking her own child. Some of the viands were devoured; a real thief had been at work.

Was it a boy?

"Hallo! what's up?" said a voice, and Hughie stepped into their midst. "Why, my ladies look as if they had been dancing the frogs' hornpipe among their own dishes"; and he laughed, and laughed again.

A sorrowful tale the little flutterers told him. No, no, he had had no hand in the matter, he assured them, and helped them to scour the woods, seeking the lost queen and her three missing attendants. They were not to be found, and the little party dispersed sorrowfully just as the sun was setting, Madge the saddest of all.

"Bow, wow!"

So Rover greeted the brother and sister at the gate at home, and ran, mounting up to the nursery before them. There, on the floor, lay four dishevelled beauties of dolls, to whom he went and barked over as in happy triumph. Rover had thought the dolls lost, going after his mistress, and finding them in the wood, and so brought them home—making more fun than a boy, Hughie said.

"PEAR, PEAR, PEAR!"

BY SHEILA.

"LET'S have a game," said Kenneth Morton. "It's raining cats and dogs. If you had any stuff in you, Monica, you'd show us a new one."

"Well, for once in a way, I do know a new game," laughed his sister. "If you'll all put your chairs round to form a ring, I'll show you how to play."

This was soon done, and Monica, taking her stand in the middle of the ring, began—

"Please listen, and I'll explain. The first thing every one has to do is to choose the name of a fruit, and tell all the others what he has chosen. No, don't all speak at once," she went on, as a shout rose from the children. "I will go round to each in turn. Kenneth, what do you choose?"

"Pomegranate."

"That won't do."

"Why not? It's the name of a fruit."

"Yes; but I forgot to say that the names must be short, or there will not be so much fun in the game. Choose again."

This time Kenneth chose "fig," then Madge took "apples," Rupert "pear," Helen "date," Jack "nut," Ruth "lemon," Brian "grape," Geoffrey "plum," and Lilias "peach."

"What are you going to choose, Monica?" said Brian. "And you haven't got a chair."

"I don't want one," she answered. "Someone is always in the middle, and as I am the only one who knows the game, I had better be this time. Now attention, please, every one!

"First, of all, you must remember that the names you have chosen belong not to you, but to your places. You will certainly not keep the same seat for long, so that you will often change your name. Now I shall say the name of a fruit three times, and if whoever is in the chair to which the name belongs says it once before I can say it three times, he keeps his seat; if not, he changes places with me."

"It doesn't sound difficult or interesting," said Jack scornfully.

"Wait and see, Master Jack," retorted Monica, smiling. "Now, does every one quite understand?"

"I don't quite," said little Rupert.

"Well, Rupert, if I say 'pear, pear, pear' before you say 'pear,' you come in the middle; if you say 'pear' first, you sit still. Do you see now?"

"Yes," said Rupert, "quite."

"Then let's begin. Kenneth, wake up."

"All right; I'm ready."

"Oh! are you? Fig, fig, fig!"

Kenneth jumped up, but a shout of laughter and cries of "You never said fig!" greeted him, and he had to take Monica's place.

"Plum, plum, plum!" he said quickly, and as Geoff, thinking of the last one, blurted out "fig!" he soon had a seat again.

And so the game went on until the children's father, hearing the shouts of laughter, came to see what was going on. Cries of "Father, father! Such a jolly game! Do come and play!" greeted him, and he was dragged into the room, placed on the rocking chair—the only seat left—and told he was "cherry" before he quite knew what was happening.

"It's a good thing your mother can't hear all this noise," he said, laughing. "Now you'll have to explain."

"Oh, you'll soon get into the way of it," said Madge, who was in the middle. "Cherry, cherry, cherry!"

"Oh, that's not fair!" exclaimed father as he was pushed into the middle. "You ought to give me another chance. However, I think I see the way, and as I only know one word, I'll get back again. Cherry, cherry——"

"Cherry!" said Madge quickly.

"Hard lines. Cherry, cherry, cherry!"

This time Madge was not quick enough, and she had to let her father sit down. But he did not keep his seat long, for every one tried to make him move.

"Not tea-time, is it?" said Brian, as the door opened. "Why, Sally, it's only an hour since dinner!"

"It's five o'clock, Master Brian," said the maid. "Please to let me lay the table."

"It is a jolly game, Monica," said Jack.

"Rather," echoed Geoff. "What do you call it?"

"'Pear, pear, pear' was what we called it at school," said Monica. "It was there I learnt it."

"We must have it again the next wet day," said Ruth.

"One thing I should like to tell you," said Monica, as they sat down to tea: "I should have done so before, but I wanted to see if anyone would find it out. Only Jack did, and of course, father. It was this: when you call a name don't look at the person you are calling, as if you do that he is ready to answer. I should do it with the little ones, but with no one else. Also the fun of the game consists in going quickly. Some of you are dreadfully slow!"

"Practice makes perfect," observed Jack.

THE AFFECTIONS.—There is a passage in the writings of Rousseau which is as true to human nature as it is beautiful in expression. "Were I in a desert," he writes, "I would find out wherewith in it to call forth my affections. If I could do no better, I would fasten them on some sweet myrtle, on some melancholy cypress, which I would court for their shade and greet kindly for their protection. I would write my name upon them, and declare that they were the sweetest trees throughout all the desert. If their leaves withered, I would teach myself to mourn; and, when they flourished, I would rejoice in their increase." Such is the absolute necessity which exists in the human heart of having something to love. Unless the affections have an object, life itself becomes joyless and insipid. The affections have this peculiarity, that they are not so much the means of happiness as their exercise is happiness itself; and, if they have no object, the happiness derived from our other power is cut off.

DEALER—"Yes, madam, I'll kill them for you and send them home." New Housewife (hesitatingly)—"Well, if you are positively sure they are fresh, you may. My husband will only eat fowl when it is fresh."

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

Japan has two score cotton mills in operation.

Egyptian researches show that chess is over 5200 years old.

There are estimated to be 240,000 varieties of insects in the world.

Successful trials have been made at Havre of an electrical locomotive.

The golden eagle is reputed to be able to fly at the rate of 140 miles an hour.

Saloon-keepers in New York city have added snuff to their free lunch counters.

Russia's standing army, which comprises 800,000 men, is the largest in Europe.

The Mohammedan is taught, it is said, that in the future state he will have 1200 wives.

The world has a large part of its wealth invested in 325,000 fixed and 107,150 locomotive engines.

Firemen at Troy, N. Y., are permitted to use the street cars in going to and returning from fires free of charge.

A juvenile fire company has been organized at Tarrytown, N. Y., composed of 20 lads, ranging in ages from 10 to 15 years.

An Atchison, Kansas, lawyer has commenced hauling wood as a means of paying the debts he contracted while practicing law.

New York city's first snow of the season caused a child's skull to be fractured by a snowball and an Italian laborer to lose an eye.

The superstitious peasants of Great Britain believe that a white pigeon alighting on a chimney or flying against a window betokens a speedy death in the house.

On a small wager George A. Lee, of Lichfield, Minn., smoked 50 cigars in 11 hours' time one day lately. The shortest time taken to consume one cigar was six minutes.

A farmer living near Three Lakes, in Forest county, Wisconsin, recently sold his wife to a man for $10. The woman is said to have raised no objection to the bargain.

In order to start fresh interest in the Gaelic tongue, leading men in Cork are having their names and addresses written or printed in Irish only on their wagons, etc.

An anaconda which Dr. Gardner found dead in Mexico, and discovered by measurement to be 37 feet long is believed to be the largest snake known to modern times.

Millions of trees have been felled to the ground in Scotland by the recent great storm which swept over the United Kingdom. The Duke of Sutherland lost about 500,000 trees of various kinds.

The Supreme Court of Indiana has decided that saloonkeepers can pull down the blinds, and that the use of blinds, shutters, colored glass and screens is one of the conveniences of civilized life.

Eleven-year-old Frank Merrick, of New Haven, Conn., while running rapidly, a few days ago, was caught under the chin by a clothes-line and thrown heavily backward, receiving dangerous injuries.

Statistics compiled by Secretary Morton show that there are in the United States more than 5,000,000 farms, upon which dwell over 30,000,000 people, who furnish more than 74 per cent. of the value of exports of this country.

Canon Farrar says that the present statistics show that the number of births in the richest districts of Kensington, London, are 20 per 1000 every year, while the number of births in the poorest districts of Fulham are 48 per 1000.

Yellow-back literature has added three more children to its already long list of victims, this time three young sisters of Bay City, Mich. After reading a blood-curdling novel recently they broke into a store and were caught and arrested.

Electric railroads are still quite a novelty, yet so rapid has been the adoption of the system that there are already some 7000 miles of track, operated by 850 electric railroads, in this country. Over 17,000 cars are in use on these roads, and engines aggregating 500,000-horse power are required.

Montenegro was one of the few countries where, until recently, clergymen wore the national costume and bore weapons. Prince Nicholas, however, has decided that this custom shall be discontinued, and has ordered the priests to adopt a clerical costume similar to that worn in other Greek Catholic countries.

According to an advertisement contained in the Danish Government Gazette, published in Copenhagen, two big volcanoes are for sale. They are situated in Iceland, and are the principal attractions of the island. The owner asks for them the sum of $400 a piece—not an excessive charge for any one who may have use for them.

There are now 55 towns and cities in England which destroy their garbage and solid refuse by burning, and 570 furnaces are employed for this purpose. In many cases the heat from these furnaces is used to produce steam, and the power is employed in pumping water and in running electric light and power plants and for other purposes.

A QUERY.

BY L. M. S.

How have I lived for others to day,
What kindly act have I done?
Have I tenderly lightened the load
Of some struggling weary one
Along life's perilous, rugged road?
If not, then let me hasten
To atone for my dire neglect,
Or God my sins will chasten,
Ere I safely reach His blest abode,
All Christ's promises to share,
And blessings that so richly flowed
For those beneath His care.
When here on earth He meekly trod
The path that led Him up to God.

ILLUSTRIOUS HANDWRITING.

"Every man," says Lord Chesterfield in one of his Letters—"every man who has the use of his eyes and of his right hand can write whatever hand he pleases." Lord Chesterfield was in his own day "the glass of fashion and the mould of form," and wrote an excellent hand himself; but his dictum is far too sweeping.

For instance, Byron's penmanship was rude and unfinished in youth, and in later life it became wretched. Macaulay, too, though he polished his periods with the greatest care, wrote an unlovely scrawl.

It may be supposed that Dean Stanley had "the use of his eyes and of his right hand," but his "copy" was so illegible that the printers charged half-a-crown a sheet extra for setting it. The late Lord Houghton, however, put them all in the shade; his handwriting was so ineffably bad that it was often a sheer impossibility to read it.

In olden times the doughty barons of England wielded the sword and the battle-axe with prodigious vigor, but disdained the pen as fit only for monks and priests. Even kings were sometimes lamentably ignorant. Henry I. had indeed some taste for literature and lampreys; but his great-grandson, King John, of unhappy memory, was not similarly blessed.

The original "Magna Charta," which may still be seen in the British Museum, does not appear to be signed by the king or any of his barons with their own hands. Possibly some of them may have been reluctant to remove their steel gloves; though there is no doubt that many a proud noble of that age was unable to sign his name. Later on, however, it was not considered a disgrace for the sovereign to know the "three Rs." Henry VIII. wrote a firm, bold hand, as might be expected from his temper. Queen Elizabeth wrote a pretty hand in her youth, but as she grew older it became more angular and irregular. The chirography of Mary, Queen of Scots, was like herself, elegant and graceful. Cromwell's hand was bold and determined: the conqueror of Naseby and Worcester, of King, Lords, and Commons, was not likely to hold a hesitating pen. Charles II. wrote quickly and carelessly: he was too fond of pleasure to take pains. George IV.'s hand was large and flowing—a credit to "the first gentleman in Europe." Queen Victoria's writing shows the effects of age, but she still makes a capital signature.

Napoleon I. was never distinguished for excellence of penmanship. When he became Emperor he used to sign his name—"Napoleon"—at full length, though the signature was even then not remarkable for beauty. Later on it dwindled to "Nap." Still later, a crooked hieroglyph, bearing some distant resemblance to an N, was the Emperor's sign-manual. His writing was indeed so hopelessly bad that Josephine is said to have taken one of his letters from Germany for a map of the seat of war! The Third Napoleon wrote a good legible hand.

As a rule, great generals have been but indifferent scribes. Washington, however, wrote a good hand; and so did Wellington in early life, but in his old age it became practically undecipherable.

Poetic handwriting is of various degrees of excellence. Moore, Rogers, Coleridge, and Wordsworth all wrote a fair hand. Gray took almost as much pains with his caligraphy as he did with his "Elegy," which cost him seven years' labor. Addison wrote a large, clear hand, the letters well formed, but each too proud or too coy to touch its neighbor. Burns wrote a large, bold, manly hand: there is vigorous independence in every stroke of the pen. The Ettrick Shepherd's writing was crooked and ill formed. Leigh Hunt wrote his charming essays in a charming hand. Thomas Campbell's writing was sloping and not graceful: it lacked the force and fire which one would expect from the author of "Ye Mariners of England." W. C. Bryant wrote a small, carefully finished hand; while N. P. Willis wrote his "Pencillings by the Way," as if he were always in a hurry. H. W. Longfellow's writing was upright, round, open, heavy—a boon to printers. Bayard Taylor wrote a very fine hand. Lord Tennyson polished his poetry with the most loving care. So fastidious was he that he had his poems set up in type, to see how they looked in print before sending them to the publisher. His handwriting corresponded to his poetry in elegance, beauty, and finish. Henrik Ibsen, the Norse poet, writes a round, clear hand, sloping backwards.

Notwithstanding the lapse of time, Sir Walter Scott still occupies a commanding position amongst our novelists. In early life he wrote a legible hand, though his stanzas displayed more character than his chirography. Towards the close of his career, when the great mind became obscured, his manuscript was crabbed, blurred and altered so as to be almost unreadable. Fenimore Cooper appears to have written his numerous novels with a burnt stick. Nathaniel Hawthorne's handwriting was irregular and indistinct. Dickens says he never copied, always sending the original draft of his works to the printer. The printer, however, would have been better pleased if Dickens had copied; for his manuscript is written in a galloping slapdash style, frequently blurred and altered, and very difficult for the compositor to set up. W. M. Thackeray's manuscript is entirely the reverse. It is free from blots and erasures; the writing is clear, neat, regular, and nearly upright, the words well apart: in short, a pleasure to read.

Grains of Gold.

The heart that has not suffered has not not loved.

To-morrow is the fool's seed time. To-day is the time to do.

Fear to die until you have done some good that will always live.

It is a risky thing to get mad and stay that way until after sunset.

Many people fail to accomplish anything because they try to do too much.

When the character of any one is discussed, silence is the good-natured is censure.

The extreme sense of perfection in some men is the greatest obstacle to their success.

You may be moral without being religious, but you cannot be religious without being mortal.

There is a Swiss proverb which says that "it takes a good many shovelfuls of earth to cover the truth."

Many people who pray for "a deeper work of grace," do not want it to come deep enough to reach the pocket.

When men cease to be faithful to their God, the one who expects to find them so to each other, will be much disappointed.

Books are the "negative" pictures of thought: and the more sensitive the mind that receives their images, the more nicely the finest lines are reproduced.

No man has come to true greatness who has not felt in some degree that his life belongs to his race, and that what God gives him he gives him for mankind.

Economy is the parent of integrity, of liberty, and of ease, and the sister of temperance, of cheerfulness, and of health. Profuseness is a cruel and crafty demon that generally involves her followers in dependence and debts.

Femininities.

You can always be happy if you are willing to rejoice with others.

A fever thermometer is now made in chatelaine form for the use of trained nurses.

Brown: "Which is the best position in which to sleep?" Jones: "On the police force."

She: "Do you love me for myself alone?" He: "Yes; and when we're married I don't want any of the family thrown in."

Love is that sort of thing which makes a man's bank account of $200 seem abundantly large to go to housekeeping on.

After living 82 and 83 years respectively, Henry Bruner and wife, of Greencastle, Indiana, died recently within a half hour of each other.

Mrs. Kenneth McLeod, of Croswell, Michigan, has celebrated her centennial. She was 20 years a maid, 60 years a wife, and 40 years a widow.

A Lawrence, Kansas, milkman has delivered milk for 37 years. He still delivers to some people who first took milk from him, and has worn out five wagons in the business.

A young woman of San Diego, Cal., who is noted for her pretty feet goes barefooted about the house, and tells her friends that the doctor has ordered her to do so for her health.

"You ought to be very proud of your wife. She is a brilliant talker."

"You're right there."

"Why, I could listen to her all night."

"I often do."

London has a practical instructor in beggary in the person of a Professor who furnishes dogs taught to lead the blind, twin children of unhealthy appearance, and other accessories of the sort.

A Baltimore man has given the name of Hayseed Gas Burner to a recent invention of his. He claims that it can't be blown out, and, that if it is blown out, it immediately relights itself automatically.

Miss Gertrude Mitchell, of Liverpool, 18 years of age, has achieved the first place in all England and Wales in the examinations for the Queen's scholarship. Her triumph was gained over 4750 competitors.

A runaway horse in Baltimore dashed against a lady on the sidewalk, rebounded, fell, broke his leg and was shot. The terrified lady was assisted into a drug store near by, was found not to be hurt, and walked home.

Mrs. Jennie Atchley, of Texas, has 800 colonies of bees, devoted entirely to queen rearing. She is the most extensive breeder of queen bees in the world. She is 33 years old and has 8 children, with whose help she does all the work in her apiary.

Princess Marie, of Roumania, wife of the Crown Prince, has an unusual hobby—the collection of perfumery bottles. In this she resembles her grandmother, the late Empress of Russia, who left a collection of beautiful perfumery bottles valued at $20,000.

Young husband: "Don't you quite understand how to cook it, darling?" Young wife, busy with cookery-book: "Yes, it's all quite clear; but it says, 'first clean the turkey,' and I was wondering whether one should use toilet or regular scouring soap."

"My daughter gets $20,000 as a wedding present; but she has an impediment in her speech," said a wealthy father-in-law to a would-be son-in-law, who was poor. "I know; but I do not regard that as an impediment to our marriage," replied the impecunious one.

An every-day soldier is walking proudly down the street, arm-in-arm with his young woman, when he runs suddenly against his sergeant. He introduces his girl very respectfully to his superior officer. "My sister, sergeant." The sergeant: "That's all right, my boy. She used to be mine, too."

"Bishop," said a young Methodist preacher to his spiritual superior, "won't you give me some advice how to gain and keep the love of my congregation?" "Yes, brother," replied the divine; "when you marry, select a woman from some other congregation than your own, and be sure that she is not handsome or stylish in her dress."

John Palmer, the inventor of the railway check system, died recently in a little town in Michigan. Many years ago he was a fiddler, and took charge of the hats and wraps of those who came to dancing parties. He gave numbered checks for them; and some railroad men who attended one of his dances appropriated the idea, and in a little while the system was adopted all over the country.

An old Chicago lady who was making jam was called upon by a neighbor. "Sam, you rascal," she said to her negro servant, "you'll be eating my jam when I'm away!" Sam protested he would die first; but the whites of his eyes rolled hungrily towards the bubbling crimson. "See here, Sam," said the old lady, taking up a piece of chalk—"I'll chalk your lips, and on my return I'll know if you've eaten any." So saying, she passed her forefinger over the thick lips of the darkey, holding the chalk in the palm of her hand and not letting it touch him. When she came back, she did not need to ask any question, for Sam's lips were chalked a quarter of an inch thick.

Masculinities.

A dude is a gentleman who tries to behave in a ladylike manner.

Goes without saying—the young man too bashful to pop the question.

A man is very much like a razor, because you can't tell how sharp he can be until he is completely strapped.

Alberry A. Whitman, William H. A. Moore and Paul Dunbar are negro writers of highly-praised verse in Chicago.

New Zealand, where one would not look for such progress, has given women equal political rights with men.

"Marvelous memory that man Green has!" "Yes, indeed. He can remember anything he wants to, no matter if it never happened."

Horace Greeley Perry is the remarkable name of a young woman who boasts of being the only woman editor in the State of Minnesota.

The drinking of salt water is said to be a perfect cure for seasickness, though it makes the drinker very miserable for a few minutes after he takes the cure.

More than 50,000,000 pounds of chewing tobacco are made every year in St. Louis, which claims to be the greatest manufacturing centre of tobacco in the world.

"Maud, run over to Mrs. De Swelle's and tell her their house is on fire."

"I can't, papa. This is Wednesday, and Mrs. De Swelle's day is Thursday. I'll go to-morrow."

"What on earth got into the organist at Ethel's wedding? He played a funeral march as the bride and groom marched down the aisle." "He was one of Ethel's list of rejected."

"While a man rarely marries his first love," said the philosopher, "I notice that he is pretty well recompensed for her loss by the satisfaction he gets in talking about her to his wife."

A negro recently applied for a marriage license in a Louisville court, and when informed that it would cost $3, shook his head wistfully and muttered: "That would buy a terrible lot of flour, boss."

Some of the furnishers of men's clothing are making an effort to emancipate their patrons from the shirt that goes on over the head by offering for sale a shirt that is put on and buttoned up like a coat.

The late Alfred W. Shield, of Richmond, Va., has left his farm, with all its stock, improvements, etc., to his two colored servants, and stocks and bonds valued at $18,000 to the University of Virginia.

Miss Grace Thomas is the only woman in Washington, D. C., engaged in the real estate business. The origin and growth of one of the popular suburbs is attributed entirely to her energy and enterprise.

The Rt. Rev. Mr. Cassock: "I greatly fear, my dear madam, that your husband is destined to reap a harvest of tares."

Mrs. Swiftly Gay: "Indeed, I fear so, bishop; he has been on one for the last three days."

Emperor William has taken steps to have the milk produced on his farms at Potsdam sold in Berlin. Carts bearing his name may be seen in the streets of the capital, the drivers of which retail the fluid to any one.

Mrs. Caroline Romney, besides other patented articles, has invented a cellular brickwork dinner pail. Cellular brickwork is made of clay, sawdust and asbestos, and is warranted to keep food hot for a half dozen hours.

A man in Kansas named Hayes raised nine boys. No. 1 jumped into a well and drowned himself; No. 2 drank poison; No. 3 used a rope; No. 4 was drowned in a tank in the State prison; No. 5 did himself up with a sharp knife.

The fair plaintiff in a Brooklyn divorce suit states that her husband has been in the habit of driving out to the cemetery, showing her the graves of his first and second wives, and telling her he intended to bury her beside them at an early day.

William Weatherby, who bore the reputation of being one of the most remarkable men of Delaware, died near Laurel recently. He was 98 years old, and up to within a few weeks of his death labored on his farm. Mr. Weatherby had been married six times.

The Paris illustrated papers are to be refrained from publishing pictures of Anarchists by an order issued by the Prefect of Police. Vanity and the craving for notoriety are ruling passions with that kind of people, it is said, and it isn't wise to make celebrities of them.

The old schoolboy who told his companions of the Boston Schoolboys' Society, at its reunion recently, that he went to school in Boston 92 years ago, was Joseph D. Jones. He is 97 years old. No one can be a member of the society who has not been out of school a full half century.

Rev. Thomas Smith, pastor of a colored church in Cincinnati, was arraigned before a local court, one day lately, charged by his wife with abusing her. He is a small man, and as soon as the judge got a good look at Mrs. Smith he was discharged. She is six feet in height and over 400 pounds in weight.

LATEST FASHION PHASES.

A favorite form of headgear will be the velvet toques, fitting well down on to the head; these are made in a daring contrast of colors to the costume, and are often accompanied by a deep full collar or shoulder cape also in the velvet, full at the edge, with upstanding collar edged sable. In the centre of the front of the toque are little sable tails drawn through jet rings.

Thus, a black costume had a toque and cape of emerald green velvet, jet and sable.

The bonnets are quite fascinating! A fair girl, I saw, wore her hair waved from the centre parting, into which the peak of her little black velvet bonnet fitted, the tiny crown was of ermine, with large "bat's-wing" bow of black velvet across the coil of hair at the back; this coil was worn broad at the top, and tapered slightly to the nape of the neck. This is quite the acknowledged style.

Another bonnet was shaped like a miniature "casque," and made in shot gold and green miroir velvet, sable tails, and gold ornaments, the narrow velvet strings being tied in long bows and short ends.

Social gatherings, home parties, and school parties being the order of the day, the children's dresses claim attention, particularly little evening frocks; so the accompanying ideas may prove of use. It would be a very charming style for a child of seven or nine years of age, and could be made in crepon, silk, or cashmere. This season there is such a wide range of colors to choose from, sufficient to satisfy the most exacting fancy; for example, pale yellow crepon, with heliotrope velvet "Baby" ribbon, which heads the tucks on skirt, and edges the yoke, put on in three rows in the favorite Vandyke pattern.

Zibeline cloth is a very soft thick material, with fine long hair, slightly waved, and lying so close down over the material as to give it a smooth and glossy look, like rich satin. It is made in all shades of color, beige, moss-green, morbore, aubergine, navy blue, etc., and of different qualities, which causes its price to differ from 3 to 6 dollars a yard, in double width. Zibeline in straight or bias stripes is specially suitable for morning dresses; the prettiest stripes are in lavender and black, old pink and black, brick-red and black, moss-green and black, and aubergine and black.

When meant for tailor costumes, zibeline cloth is of mixed tints, soft and neutral, as in fancy English cloths. Some are double-faced, mordore outside, for instance, and moss green inside, or else Ophelia mauve and beige. If used for a mantle, double-faced zibeline is not lined; the inside is used for the trimmings, pockets, revers, collar, and facings.

Bure shares the success of zibeline; it is also of various styles. The most elegant is canvas bure, known in England as hopsack, resembling Java canvas in texture, and is only manufactured in neutral tints. For a costume de fatigue, we would advise, in preference, mixed bure of such tints as moss and tobacco color, moss and garnet, lavender and reddish-brown.

Neigeuse bure, in flakelike patterns, is also pretty, as well as brocaded bure, in almond-shaped patterns. But the prettiest and most novel style of bure is bure soleil, which is to be had in three different colorings only, seal-brown and aubergine, tobacco and lavender, and lavender and black. These tints are those of the woolen part of the tissue, while the under part, or ground of the material, is of old-gold-colored silk, which only shows discreetly through the woolen texture, leaving its sober look to the tout ensemble of the fabric.

Cheviots do not sufficiently differ from those of former seasons to deserve particular description. The fashionable colors are lavender-blue, aubergine, a reddish purple; absinthe, a dull green; cocoanut-brown, tobacco-color, mordore, or golden-bronze, and marengo, which is a dark brown, almost black.

In fancy woolens we may mention coat-of-mail, consisting of a fine texture in relief over a colored ground, heliotrope, absinthe, poppy-red, lavender or peacock-blue, and glow-worm, a tissue of dark wool finely streaked with bright satin, and astrakhand, that is strewn all over with fluffy bits of wool, vaguely resembling astrakhan.

Golden rain is a tissue of mixed silks forming fine stitchings over a ground of wool-shot of two colors. And there is a number of other such fabrics, finely streaked or speckled with bright silk over a ground of dark-colored wool.

Double-breasted effects appear upon many of the bodices of winter costumes, and this mode is often carried out in stylish house dresses, the bodice pointed or in basque form, and cut down low, over a guimpe of some pretty contrasting color and material. The double-breasted effect shows below this guimpe and flat bretelles are added from the tops of the low-cut waist. These are of velvet, plain or partly veiled with falling lace, or of cloth braided or finished with many rows of narrow gimp.

Crepons are considerably less the rage than they were last season, French cashmere, camel's-hair sacking in its varied qualities and effects, serge, and vigogne being strong rivals. However, they are still very much the fashion, and in the heavy qualities show tempting colors for winter wear. The lighter grades are dyed in beautiful tints for evening toilets. The heaviest wool crepons are deeply crinkled all over, and closely resemble Japanese crepe, which is not at all wiry, while others are crinkled in two-toned stripes.

A new textile for ball toilets closely resembles crape, except that it shines like satin and is manufactured in the most beautiful colors.

Beautiful dancing-toilets are made of changeable satin brocades trimmed with lace insertion and edging, with skirts of accordion-pleated crepon set to a yoke of the brocade.

Odds and Ends.

ON SUBJECTS USEFUL AND ENTERTAINING.

Always keep a jar of cracker dust on hand for breading, or else save up all pieces of bread, and once a month dry them in an open oven, then place them in a bag and pound until fine.

To make linen beautifully white, prepare the water for washing by putting into every ten gallons a large handful of powdered borax; or with the clothes one teaspoonful of spirits of turpentine.

Another way to keep out water is to heat the soles slightly, then rub them with copal varnish and let them dry. Repeat this operation three times and you can go into the wet with impunity.

A new cage bird, the nonpareil, is fast securing a position among household pets that bids fair to prove a successful rivalship of the canary as a song bird, and in elegance of appearance, plumage and graceful motions he is far superior. He is a native of the South.

The perfume atomizer has taken the place of the old-established bottle of perfume, which stands on milady's toilet table. The latest design is a porcelain affair in shades of delicate blue or pink. The bowl is encased in a tracery of filigree silver and a net of silver with covers the rubber spray.

An evening costume is of silver gray striped moire antique, faintly shot with apple green and heliotrope, and trimmed around the skirt with three ruches of silk. The decolette bodice has a deep collar of apple green satin, draped with jewelry and embroidered net, repeating cleverly the delicate colors seen in the moire itself.

One ounce of sandal wood powder with ten grains of pine musk will make a dozen sachet bags. Sift the powder well, so as to scatter the musk; use white cotton and any loosely woven muslin or silk; the ends of the bags or rolls may be tied, and there you have scent for a lifetime that will cling to the trunk, bureau drawer, linen or letter case like the distilled roses of the poet's shattered vase.

When the tablecloths are worn out in the centre the thrifty woman either cuts them down the centre, hems the two raw edges thus made, and joins the other two edges very neatly, thus making a cloth that will last two or three months on the nursery or kitchen table, or she draws threads and makes napkins out of the strong parts, while the thin pieces are put away in her "emergency" bandages.

Paraffin will soften leather which has been hardened by water and restore its suppleness. A mixture of cream and ink is an excellent thing to rub on ladies' fine kid boots. To keep your shoes from creaking, rub the soles with linseed oil. You may do this more thoroughly by letting the soles rest on a dish containing a little of the oil, which will be absorbed by the leather, which in addition to stopping the creaking, will make the shoes impermeable to snow and water.

A brilliant coloring for tablecloths and doyleys is very fashionable just now. A tablecloth of excellent effect is embroidered with white flax flora on cornflower blue linen in a design of daisies, grass and dragon flies. Another, of Autumn yellow, has a border of nasturtiums carried out in shades of apricot, pink and green. A very elaborate one of rose pink has a hemstitched border and the design of poppies interwoven with ribbon is embroidered in deep shades of rose-pink and dull green. The doylie to be used with this are in the form of a large open poppy and are handsomely embroidered to match the cloth.

The greatest pain-annihilator of the age is Salvation Oil. It always cures.

COOL GENERALS.

Murat, Napoleon's dashing chief of cavalry, whose splendid enthusiasm won many desperate charges, could be as cool as his master upon occasion. At the taking of Moscow, while the troops sat in the saddle under a murderous fire, Murat received, writes a contemporary, a despatch to which an answer was required. Though his mettlesome horse was trembling, Murat laid the reins upon the horn of the saddle, took his note-book in one hand and a pencil in the other, and began to write a response. Suddenly a shell fell and exploded on the ground close by. The horse leaped into the air and swung wildly around. Murat simply transferred the pencil to the hand that held the note-book, calmed the horse with the other hand, and then went on writing his despatch as if nothing had happened. A shout of admiration went up along the line. Murat saw that the enthusiasm aroused by his trifling act had created a favorable moment for a charge. He gave the order, and his men swept clear through the enemy's line.

It is said that General Reynier once saved the French army in Calabria, in 1806, from a complete rout simply by the manner in which he smoked a cigar. The English Infantry fire had compelled the French to retreat. Reynier, fearing a panic, remained to the last and brought up the rear. Though the English fire was murderous, he had lighted a cigar, and his retreating men noticed that the puffs of smoke went up, as his horse moved slowly on, with absolute regularity. Puff! A wait. Puff! Another wait. Puff! The enemy were pouring on, firing vigorously as they advanced; but nothing could accelerate Reynier's smoking. His soldiers rallied under the inspiration of the queer spectacle, and got off in good order.

Perhaps the most cold-blooded commander who ever lived was the French general Saint-Cyr. He was a great tactician, but totally neglected the morale of his men. He was never seen on horseback, and never showed himself before the lines.

On one occasion, when he was simply a general of division, the impetuous Marshal Oudinot, puzzled to know what to do in an emergency, asked Saint-Cyr's advice, frankly telling him that he was "nonplussed." "You, monseigneur," said Saint-Cyr, "are a marshal of the empire, and I am a general of division. I shall faithfully carry out your orders, but it would not be becoming for me to advise you."

Later on Saint-Cyr succeeded to the command of the army, and then adopted a peculiar method of generalship. He formed his plan of battle clearly, precisely, and with admirable foresight. Then he sent his orders to his subordinates and shut himself up in his quarters, absolutely forbidding entrance to a single soul. Then he took out his violin and went to studying a hard piece of music as tranquilly as if he had been in the midst of profound peace.

The battle which won Saint-Cyr his baton as a marshal of the empire was fought while he was fiddling in his tent. He had apparently foreseen everything, and the carrying out his plans completely crushed the enemy.

IT IS USEFUL TO KNOW—That a "country" dance means a "contra" (opposite) dance.

That Socrates, when asked, "Is it better to marry or not?" replied, "Let a man do which he pleases, he will repent."

That "Oh, dear me!" is equivalent to "O Dio mio," "Oh, my God!"

That a small piece of potassium, a little larger than a pin's head, dropped into a glass of water, will cause a violet-bluish flame to rise up.

That common salt added to the water used in masonry work during cold weather prevents disintegration by frost.

That very hot water, frequently applied to a black eye, will reduce the swelling, and is considered to be one of the most efficient remedies.

That a gentleman should be introduced to a lady—not a lady to a gentleman.

That hay sprinkled with a little chloride of lime and left for a couple of hours in a freshly-painted room will remove the effluvium of the paint.

THE Young Housewife—"You have some potatoes, Nora?" Nora (the cook)—"Yes, mum." The Young Housewife—"And there's plenty of sugar in the house?" Nora—"Yes, mum." The Young Housewife—"Well, then, let us have a dish of sweet potatoes at dinner."

To pass the winter season comfortably avoid colds by using Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup.

ENGAGING A COOK.—"Our cook left us a few days ago," said a depressed-looking journalist the other evening. "She said she couldn't live in a house the head of which lived so irregularly and kept such terribly bad hours, even if his wife was ill. And there has been nothing but trouble for me since. I had to get my own breakfast this morning.

"That was bad enough. But this afternoon, as a direct result of the cook's unhappy departure, I was placed in a most embarrassing position;" and the recollection caused the scribe to look very mournful indeed.

"I started for a registry office, with the firm intention of getting a cook or of leaving for a tropical country, where one can live on raw fruit. Several alleged cooks passed in review before me, but none of them suited me.

"While I was questioning one, a good-looking, modestly dressed woman entered the place. Something about her appearance struck me favorably. I said to myself, 'There's the cook I want;' and I started for her.

"I recall now that the proprietress made an attempt to attract my attention. But I took no notice of her.

"My state of mind was such, owing to the departure of our cook, that it never occurred to me that anybody else could want to procure servants. I touched the new arrival on the arm, and said—

"'You're the very woman I want for a cook. What are your terms?'

"Mercy! She turned slowly round, put up a pair of those long-handled glasses—I forget what you call 'em—and calmly looked me over.

"'I want a tall footman,' she said. 'You are tall. What are your terms?'

"We are still without a cook."

CONTENTED.—A well-known writer says the typical Canadian is characterized by a most unusual contentedness with his lot.

An old man who was living with his wife in the poorest shanty on the prairie, constructed of one-inch boards, unplastered within, and whose homestead was mortgaged, heard that by the death of a relative in England he had inherited a large fortune.

The information came to him in the form of a newspaper cutting, sent by some friend. Two or three months later an acquaintance offered him congratulations.

"I suppose it's all right," said the Canadian, "but I don't know."

"Have you no legal adviser?"

"No," was his reply. "If they bring the money to us, we shall be glad of it; but they must bring it! I shan't bother!"

The Marquess of Lorne has amusingly related how he tried in vain to discover grumblers in the great North-West. One settler who was asked whether he had anything to complain of remained for some moments meditatively silent. Presently his face brightened, and he exclaimed—

"Yes; it is cold in winter and hot in summer, and the dust makes me wash myself twice a week!"

To a similar question a Scottish woman answered—

"Well, no; that is—I have not the English—but I wad say that the milk is too rich for the children!"

Too many baths and too rich milk! These are ills which may surely be borne with fortitude.

BRIGHT EYES

—AND—

Blonde and Brunette,

Companion Pictures in Beautiful Colors as a Premium to Subscribers to

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

One objection to picture-premiums is that they have to be framed afterwards. THE SATURDAY EVENING POST gets over this difficulty and expense in the pair of magnificent new companion pictures, in beautiful colors, they are now offering, "BRIGHT EYES" and "BLONDE AND BRUNETTE." These pictures are two of the most beautifully-artistic, finely-colored and life-like portraitures of childhood ever put before the public. No description can give an idea of their loveliness, beauty and charm. They must be seen to be appreciated. But their chief advantage is that just as we send them they may be hung up WITHOUT FRAME OR GLASS. The frame is done without by their being held between strong, highly-polished brass borders, with hook for hanging, and the usual glass is dispensed with by the high, clear varnish, enabling the pictures to be rubbed off and dusted without injury to the delicate colors beneath. The pictures are mounted on strong paper, are 16x22 inches in size, and will be sent to every person who sends to us, direct, $2.00 for a year's subscription. Address

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

726 Sansom St., Phila., Pa.

SUDDEN FRIGHT.

Various are the consequences of sudden terror upon different individuals. Some it affects but slightly, while others lose their reason, the hair turns white in a short space of time, and even death is not unknown as the result of a sudden fright.

Many explanations have from time to time been offered to account for the sudden bleaching of the hair; still it remains a mystery. Dozens of instances might be given.

A well-known case is that of the Duke of Brunswick, whose beard and hair whitened in the space of twenty-four hours, upon receiving news that his father had been mortally wounded. A similar change occurred to Charles I. when he attempted to escape from Crrisbrooke Castle; and Shakespeare alludes to the bleaching of Henry IV.'s hair in Falstaff's speech: "Worcester is stolen away to-night; thy father's beard is turned white with the news."

Of more modern instances, it is recorded that a chemist was called in to destroy a mad dog. The servant took him to the cellar where the brute was kept chained up, but having forgotten to bring a light returned upstairs for one, leaving the chemist alone with the rabid animal.

To his horror he discovered that the dog was loose and roaming about the cellar. He was too far from the door to get outside at one bound and he stood where he was almost afraid to breathe. The dog had apparently not yet discovered his presence, but was, of course, likely to do so at any moment; at any rate the chemist anticipated certain death as soon as a light was brought.

Presently, after a lapse of time, which seemed an age, he felt the hot breath of the howling, infuriated animal on his hand. Suddenly, with a well-directed kick, he sent the dog spinning to the other end of the cellar and bounded for the door, being just in time to get outside and close it as the brute came bouncing against it.

Eventually the servant arrived with the light and the dog was destroyed, but the chemist, who entered the cellar with light brown hair, left it with gray.

Another instance, one of which the writer has personal knowledge, is that of an elderly maiden lady, who had invested her money in a bank which offered unusually large interest on deposits. The bank collapsed, her life savings were swallowed up in the smash, and her hair became as white as driven snow within two days of hearing the news.

It is not only in an awakened state that mental anguish bleaches the air. An Oxford man, a few nights before entering upon his examination for a degree, dreamed that he had failed.

The dream was vividly before his mind when he awoke the following morning, and his surprise was great when, on looking in the glass, he discovered that his hair had suddenly changed from black to an uniform grey.

Instances of loss of reason resulting from a shock to the system are often met with. Very pathetic was the story, recently recorded in the newspapers, of a woman in the East End, who left her two little children at home unattended while she went out to do some shopping.

She returned in time to see the youngest fall from a window on the second floor, and be literally dashed to pieces on the pavement outside. From that moment her mind became unhinged; nothing could pacify her, nothing consoled her.

She is now confined in an asylum, and passes her most lucid moments in bullying the keeper for keeping her away from the children.

Equally heartrending is the case of a young woman who may be seen any day waiting at the mouth of a coal pit in Wales, when the miners leave off work. She is there to receive her sweetheart, but he never comes.

Several years ago an explosion occurred at the mine, and her lover was one of the unfortunate fellows who were killed. The news of his death was broken to her as gently as it was in the power of a rough miner to do it. She never understood his meaning however, for when she heard the sound of the explosion her reason departed, and has never since returned.

A soldier in one of the continental armies by some means incurred the dislike of his comrades. To punish him they determined to give him a thorough fright.

One evening he was seized, blindfolded, and brought before a mock tribunal on some fictitious charge. He was tried, found guilty, and, although loudly protesting his innocence, was sentenced to death.

He was taken outside, placed against a tree, and some of his comrades were told to shoot him. On the command "Fire!" being given the soldiers discharged their rifles. They were only firing blank cartridges, but the man whom they wanted to frighten, dropped dead from fright.

The case of the man who believed himself beheaded, when in fact he was only struck with a wet towel, is too well known to be repeated, but it serves to show what results fright will bring about, even if it is only of an imaginary danger.

Fresh Periodicals.

"The Popular Science Monthly" for January has just been issued. It continues to maintain in all respects, its lead of its class of publications. Published at New York.

The January, number of "Cassell's Family Magazine" is out, and it begins the year with the same excellent variety and abundance of contents always characterizing it. Published at New York.

"The Quiver" for January is as usual filled with the best of matter, and illustrations for Sunday and general reading. Published at New York.

"The Cosmopolitan" for January is another World's Fair number being mainly filled with pictures of scenes and objects of that great event. Altogether at its price it is not equalled by any magazine in the world. Published at New York.

PENALTIES OF SIZE.—Edward Irving, the eloquent preacher who sixty years ago stirred London society, was a tall, stalwart, well-formed man. Sometimes he cheerfully endured the penalties of his physical greatness, and sometimes he lost his temper when circumstances made it unpleasantly prominent. When he began his work at Glasgow as Dr. Chalmers' assistant, his appearance impressed every one. A lady belonging to Dr. Chalmers' church had given orders one day for visitors were not to be admitted, as she was engaged. Suddenly a maid-servant interrupted her, and in great excitment exclaimed, "Mem, there's a wonderful grand gentleman called! I couldna say you were engaged to him. I think he maun be a Highland chief." "Do you know, Doctor," said another lady to Dr. Chalmers himself, "what people are saying about your new assistant? They say he must be a brigand chief!" "Well, well," answered the Doctor, with a smile, "whatever they say, they never think him like anything but a leader of men." Irving bore these compliments to his stalwart frame with cheerfulness; but, when his appearance suggested a horse, then he protested. It was one summer night that he shouted across a narrow strait to the ferryman. As he stood in the twilight, with his portmanteau on his shoulder, he heard an answer, and presently saw the boat gliding over the water. When it reached halfway, it turned back. Irving became impatient. There was a commotion on the poste back, lights flickered on the shore, and then oars began to dip, and the boat slowly approached. As the boat glided up to the beach, the impatient traveler demanded to know why the boatman had turned, thus keeping him waiting so long. "I thought you were a mun on a horse," replied the boatman, looking up bewildered, "and I went back to fetch the horse-boat." Irving did not like the mistake.

THEY had reached that stage of the engagement where she felt free to amuse herself by exploring his pockets. It happened that he had forgotten to take out the ticket for his watch, and when she found that she immediately wanted to know what it was. "That," said he, with as much dignity as he could command, "is a souvenir of the World's Fair."

THE Archduchess Ranier possesses some pearls of unusual beauty, but which, some time ago, showed signs of losing their brilliancy. They were what the experts call "ill;" and as the only cure the pearls will have to be again submerged in their original element and remain in the sea for several years.

TO PLAY MUSIC
WITHOUT STUDY
THIS CAN BE DONE BY MEANS OF THE
INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE TO THE PIANO OR ORGAN

Anyone knowing a tune, either "in the head," as it is called, or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC OR THE INSTRUMENTS. In fact it may be the first time they have ever seen a piano or organ, yet if they know so much as to whistle or hum a tune—say "Way Down on the Swanee River," for instance—they can play it IMMEDIATELY, correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this GUIDE. THE GUIDE shows how the tunes are to be played with both hands and in different keys.

It must be understood that the Guide will not make an accomplished musician without study. It will do nothing of the kind. What it can do, do well and WITHOUT FAIL is to enable anyone understanding the nature of a tune or air in music to play such tunes or airs, without ever having opened a music book.

By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—the ear grows accustomed to the sounds, and the fingers used to the position and touch of the keys. So, after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, almost with the skill and rapidity of the trained player, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

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P. O. Box 463. Washington, D. C.

Honorably discharged soldiers and sailors who served ninety days, or over, in the late war, are entitled, if now partially or wholly disabled for ordinary manual labor, whether disability was caused by service or not, and regardless of their pecuniary circumstances.

WIDOWS of such soldiers and sailors are entitled (if not remarried) whether soldier's death was due to army service or not, if now dependent upon their own labor for support. Widows not dependent upon their own labor are entitled if the soldier's death was due to service.

CHILDREN are entitled (if under sixteen years) in almost all cases where there was no widow, or she has since died or remarried.

PARENTS are entitled if soldier left neither widow nor child, provided soldier died in service, or from effects of service, and they are now dependent upon their own labor for support. It makes no difference whether soldier served or died in late war or in regular army or navy.

Soldiers of the late war, pensioned under one law, may apply for higher rates under other laws, without losing any rights.

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Old claims completed and settlement obtained, whether pension has been granted under later laws or not.

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Certificates of service and discharge obtained for soldiers and sailors of the late war who have lost their original papers.

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The Great Liver and Stomach Remedy
An Excellent and Mild Cathartic.
PERFECTLY TASTELESS!
Over Forty Years in Use and Never Known to Fail.

Possess properties the most extraordinary in restoring health. They stimulate to healthy action the various organs, the natural conditions of which are so necessary for health, grapple with and neutralise the impurities, driving them completely out of the system.

RADWAY'S IS A COMPOUND PILL.

One of their ingredients will attack the lazy LIVER, another will rouse up the BOWELS, another will attack the SKIN, and still another hurry up the KIDNEYS. This is the beauty of their effective operation; whilst they have a specific action on the Liver, they have a reflex or reflective action on this same organ by their other specific effects on the other organs of the system; whilst they force with the one hand, they persuade with the other, till all the organs are brought to harmonious action, and perform their required functions.

Why continue in uncomfortable feelings, dull, drooping sensations, want of energy, lack of activity, loss of appetite, weakness, depression of spirit, feverishness, fullness of the stomach, ill humor, or other symptoms of bad health, when a few doses of Radway's pills will create new life in you and restore to health the long sufferer from constipation, biliousness, indigestion or other painful and oppressive feelings, arising from a sluggish or gorged liver and inactivity of its associates? In all cases where a Purgative or Cathartic, Aperient or Laxative Medicine is required,

RADWAY'S PILLS

Drive out all diseases, from whatever cause they may be making inroads on your system; delay no longer, the remedy is at hand; a dose or two will convince you of the truth.

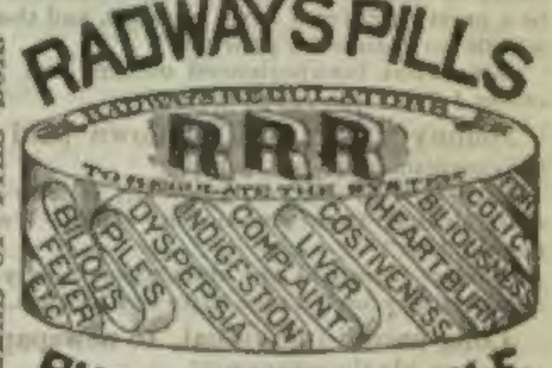
To thousands now suffering, we say, you have the remedy in your own hands. Radway's is a well-known pill, containing the choicest of extracts taken from the VEGETABLE KINGDOM ONLY, compounded in the most scientific proportions, which were found by Dr. Radway to be the best adapted to stimulate and restore to healthy action the disordered organs. They contain no minerals or metals or their salts—nothing poisonous enters into their composition, and they are

PERFECTLY SAFE TO TAKE.

They were amongst the first coated pills ever introduced to the public; there is no unpleasant taste or smell to these pills, and they can easily be swallowed. To those who have used our pills we have nothing to say, they know best what benefits they have derived from them, but to those who are looking for a

Health Restorer

We cannot too strongly recommend a well tried, safe and efficient remedy such as is presented in Radway's Pills.



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Humorous.

AFTER THE BAWL.

After the bawl is over—
After Johnny's been yanked
To the barn, by his irate father,
And spanked, and spanked, and spanked,
His heart-sore mother showers
Pennies and sweets in a way,
That most makes Johnny wish for
A thrashing every day.

—M. P. D.

Up to date—your calendar.

And it came to pass—the counterfeit bill.

The busy haunts of men—their consciences.

An affair of the heart—The circulation of the blood.

What five letters form a sentence of forgiveness?—I x q q u.

An early spring—jumping out of bed at 5 o'clock in the morning.

Loafing is a hard business to learn. It takes all your time.

What is it we can't do very well without, yet we turn it out?—The gas.

When some men discharge an obligation, you can hear the report for miles around.

"You say the architect's assistant was arrested for fraud?" "Yes; you see he was a designing rascal."

An Irishman, writing a sketch of his life, says he ran away early from his father because he discovered he was only his uncle.

When a gentleman visits a young lady, why does she not like him to come with a knock at the door?—Because she would wish him to come with a ring.

May: "What made you tell that horrid Miss Stumble that she danced like an angel?" Arthur: "Because I thought they never danced, and neither will she."

"I insist upon your leaving the house!" she said, angrily.

"Certainly," replied the tramp, blandly; "I have no intention of taking it with me."

Brown, indignantly: "Waiter, your coat-sleeve dipped into this lady's soup!"

Waiter, urbanely: "Don't mention it, sir! It will wash out all right! What fish, sir?"

Hicks: "I wouldn't have a feather bed in our house for anything!"

Mrs. Hicks: "And my mother can't sleep on anything but a feather bed."

Hicks: "So I heard you say before."

Eulalia, sentimentally: "Oh, no; I have no desire for great wealth. I should be very happy as the wife of a noble breadwinner." George, practically: "And I should be happy, very happy, as the husband of a good breadmaker." She concluded to learn.

Excited husband, rushing in with telegram: "Claribel, an old uncle of mine has died and left me a fortune of $100,000!"

Joyful wife: "I am so glad, Henry! We can get a new clothes-basket now, can't we?"

She: "Now, dear, I think we ought to begin to practice economy right from the very first."

He: "Well—er, suppose, then, we never touch a morsel of the bread you bake. Just lay it all away."

Laudleigh: "That snowstorm you have painted is wonderfully realistic!"

Daubleigh: "It must be. A tramp got into my studio one day, caught sight of the picture, and unconsciously put on my fur overcoat before he went out."

Damsel, looking for compliments: "No, Captain Judson, I am not coming to the dance to-morrow night, for I hear there is to be a pretty girl from town present, and there will be no chance for poor me."

Gallant but inexperienced officer: "Oh, do come; I don't like pretty girls!"

Johnny: "Mrs. Talkemdown paid a big compliment to me to-day."

Mother: "Did she really? Well, there's no denying that that woman has sense. What did she say?"

Johnny: "She said she didn't see how you came to have such a nice little boy as I am."

Long-haired individual, to newspaper manager: "Is the editor in?"

Manager: "No; he has gone off on his vacation."

"Do you know whether he read my poem before he went?"

"I think he did. He asked for an extra week's rest."

A country-woman, in the absence of her husband, sold two cows to a passing dealer. As he said he had no money with him, she was unwilling to let him have them without security. "Very well," he said; "then I will leave one of the cows for security." The woman agreed, and calmly allowed him to march off with the other cow.

"Well, what do you think of my picture at the Academy of Design?" asked young Mahlstick of Jones the other day.

"Fair, dear boy, fair; but, now you ask me, I must confess I liked your earlier style far better."

"Earlier style?"

"Yes—when you didn't paint at all, you know."

A Terrible Moment.—When Ismail Pasha, the late Khedive of Egypt, reigned over that historical land, he had in a garden, a contemporary tells us, a large cage of African lions. One day, while he was walking in the garden, the keeper, accompanied by a little girl, entered, carrying a basket of meat for the lions. The Khedive walked towards the cage to watch the beasts eat. They were hungry, and pounced upon their food with ravenous fury. Standing close by the cage, with her hands resting on the bars, was the little child. "Why do you permit your daughter to go so near the lions?" the Khedive asked of the keeper. "Oh," replied the keeper, "they are so accustomed to her they would not harm her!" "Then open the door and put her inside," said the Khedive. The keeper, with the submissiveness of those who know their lives will pay forfeit if they disobey their ruler, made with his eyes an appeal for mercy. But, seeing none in the Khedive's face, he kissed the little one tenderly, lifted her up, opened the door, placed her inside, and, as the door swung to, he turned away his face and groaned. The little one, though she did not stir, seemed not afraid. The lions appeared surprised, and the largest and fiercest rose and walked towards her. The Khedive stood gazing at the scene calmly, with a curious smile. The lion went up to the child, smelled her, looked at her for fully half a minute, then lay down at her feet and beat the floor with its tail. Another lion approached. The first one gave an ominous growl, and the second lion went back. The others crouched low, as if preparing to spring, but they did not. This continued for about five minutes, the big lion never taking his eyes from the girl and ceaselessly lashing the floor. The Khedive by this time was satisfied, and turned to the keeper and commanded him to thrust a live lamb into the cage through another door. The keeper quickly caught a straying lamb and obeyed. As he did so, every lion sprang upon the lamb. "Take out the child!" the Khedive commanded; and scarcely had the words escaped him before the keeper, who had already run to that end of the cage, jerked open the door, snatched the little one out, and clasped her in his arms. The Khedive laughed, tossed the keeper a coin, and walked on.

Tiny Bounced Him.—Sothern was once playing "Lord Dundreary" in a small town, whose regular playgoers plumed themselves on their imperturbable demeanor in the theatre. A joker who lived in that town had just returned from New York, and gravely put in circulation a hint that it was extremely unfashionable to laugh at comedians.

The hint "took." Sothern played the first act in a frigid atmosphere. He could not understand it, but he called the company together before the second act, and implored them to "pitch in and wake 'em up." They did their utmost, but without perceptible result. Utterly beaten, the great laughter-maker dived into the dressing-room.

Presently the manager of the house joined him.

"Shake, Ned, old boy!" he exclaimed. "You're doin' great. Got 'em sure. Never seen a more delighted audience."

"What!" the dazed response. "Delighted be blowed! They haven't cracked a smile."

"Laughed, sir!" replied the manager. "I should hope not. There was one man that snickered, and we bounced him out afore he knowed what ailed him."

A well known chemist was boasting, in the company of friends, of his well assorted stock in trade. "There isn't a drug missing," he said, "not even one of the most uncommon sort." "Come now," said one of the by-standers, by way of a joke, "I bet that you don't keep any spirit of contradiction, well stocked as you pretend to be." "Why not?" replied the chemist, not in the least embarrassed at the unexpected sally. "You shall see for yourself." So saying, he left the group and returned in a few minutes leading by the hand—his wife!

He had lingered until the conversation irresistibly grew morose. "I think," he said, "that it is very proper for a man's friends to refer to his principal traits of character after his death. It should be done simply and unaffectedly." "I am sure that your wishes will be gratified in that respect," she said. "Why?" "Because it will merely be according to custom to refer to you as the late Mr. Jenkyns."

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Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

FOR WIGS, INCHES.	TOUPEES AND SCALPS. INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.	No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck.	No. 2. Over forehead as far as required.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.	No. 3. Over the crown of the head.
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They have always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

Dollard's Herbanium Extract for the Hair.

This preparation has been manufactured and sold at Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, the demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

Also DOLLARD'S REGENERATIVE CREAM to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the Hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

Mrs. Edmondson Gorter writes to Messrs. Dollard & Co., to send her a bottle of their Herbanium Extract for the Hair. Mrs. Gorter has tried in vain to obtain anything equal to it as a dressing for the hair in England.

MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER.
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov., 29, '83. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

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Very respectfully,
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Ex-Member of Congress, 8th District.

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